

LONDON READER

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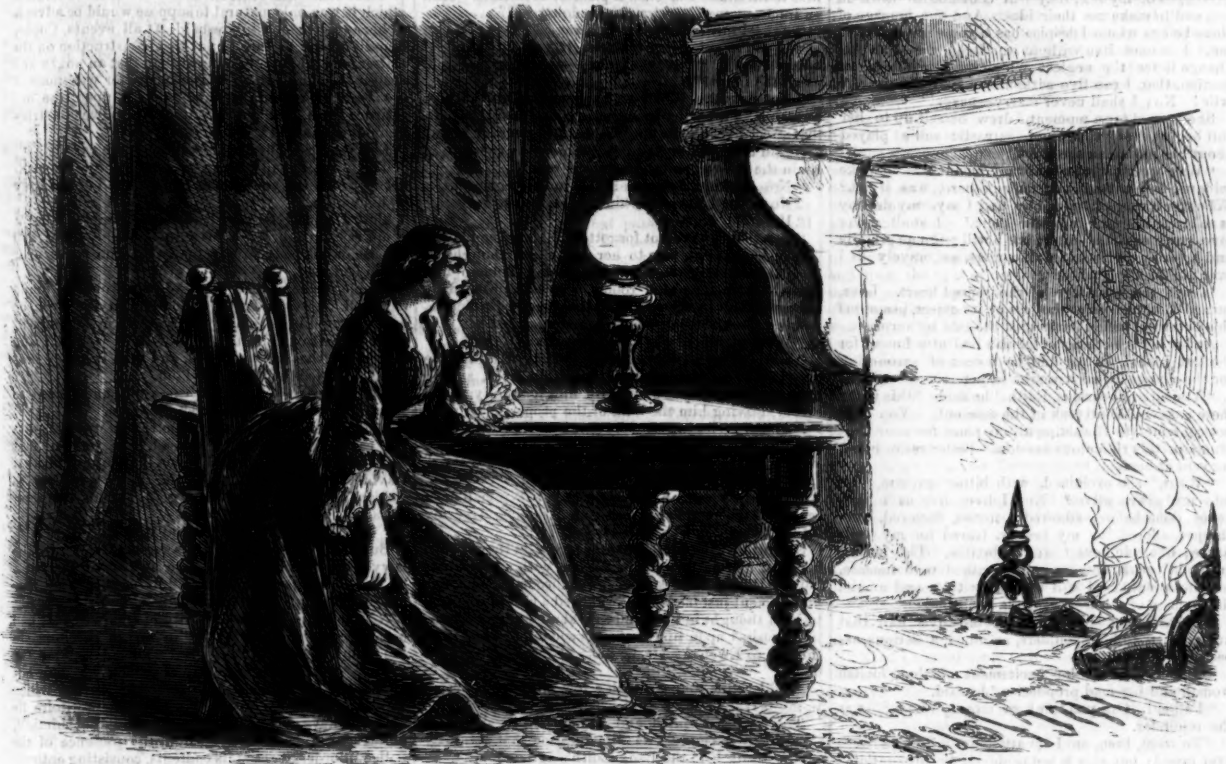
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[MARGARET.]

THE GOLDEN MASK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Stranger's Secret," "Man and His Idol," "The Seventh Marriage," "The Warning Voice," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

FABIAN'S GOOD FORTUNE.

Her flashing eye, her bosom's nervous swell,
Show'd that a shade had passed between her heart
And that which formed its sunshine.

Lost and Found.

"But the card—Fabian Temple's card—how did it come to be lying on the grass at my feet?"
It was the Lady Edith who put the question to the earl, her father, as they conversed in the library, two days after the *matinée*.

"Haven't an idea," was the earl's reply. "Accident, I suppose."

"Accident!" cried the proud beauty, impatiently. "I don't believe in accidents. And then to think that I had scarcely picked it up and glanced at it before that hideous woman forced her way into my presence and screamed at me in her wild and raving way. And all her raving is of Fabian Temple, too! A man as far beneath me as the woman herself. A man I tolerated for a season—the season I came out, when I was foolish and inexperienced—and have since as clean forgotten as if he had never existed. And we are to become familiar again, she predicts. Fabian and I. A briefless barrister, who has thrown himself away upon some low person, is to exercise an influence on my future! Monstrous! And yet the coincidence was strange—the card—the woman's appearance—the prediction—all impress me as strange and inexplicable."

The earl, who was leaning his broad shoulders against the marble mantelpiece, looking down upon his daughter with a supercilious smile, merely yawned and played with the golden pendants at his watch-guard.

"All will be explained in time, no doubt," he returned. "Never distress yourself over trifles."

"Do I?" cried the beauty, with flashing eyes. "Is it in my nature to suffer trifles or even events of moment to disturb my equanimity? You know it is not. Whatever may happen to me, I am marble."

The earl, gazing down into his daughter's face, thought within himself that her nature assimilated less to marble than to lava—the lava that flows molten from the volcano's mouth before it turns to stone.

She was cold and marble-like now—there was a statuesque repose, and an atmosphere of stately indifference about her, but it told of the volcano, of fires which had raged, and which might, even yet, be only subdued and kept under, not extinguished.

And looking at her as he now did, the earl noticed, for the first time, the singular change which had come over his queenly daughter during the last few weeks. The first effect of the loss of the man she had loved, and trifled with, and slain, was prostration. To this had succeeded a deadly calm, always ready to break into the desperation of indifference—the desperation which is reckless of consequences and defiant of the arrows of fate. And this feeling expressed itself in every lineament of the face and every movement on the part of the proud beauty.

The earl was neither a good man nor a fond father, but he was proud of his daughter, whom all courted, flattered, and worshipped; he admired the courage and audacity with which she held her own against the crowds of suitors whom she at once encouraged and kept at bay, and, moreover, he had his own views as to the position he intended her to occupy.

This being so, the palpable change he noticed, aroused his attention.

"Pray, Edith," he said, "dismiss from your mind all thought of the absurdities you have mentioned. Nothing so injurious as superstitious fancies. They distress the mind, and whatever distresses the mind affects the health. What have people in our high station to do with a beggar-woman set on by a low fellow like—what do you call him?—Temple, just so,

Temple—for no other purpose than to annoy and distress you, and out of revenge for the 'cut' you so properly gave him as the reward of his impertinence in daring to aspire to your favour? Dismiss it all, and let us talk of what is of real importance. You have been 'out' now—for how many seasons? You

The dark eyes of the Lady Edith blazed with sudden indignation.

"Father!" she exclaimed, in a tone of remonstrance.

"Shall we say five?" pursued the earl, heedless of the interruption. "We will say five. During that time you have had every advantage which high birth and matchless beauty could confer on you"—he bowed as if paying a compliment to a stranger—"and by their aid you have made many conquests. You have reigned supreme on the Olympus of Fashion, and have brought 'all sorts and conditions of men' to your feet. But to what end has this been, my Edith? To feed your pride and gratify your caprice? Yes; it has answered both these ends, but there is another and a more important which it has not answered. You are still the reigning beauty; but while others with half your advantages have made positions, you—"

The indignant woman rose from her seat, and grasping the table for support with her left hand, turned toward the earl a face white with passion.

"You insult me, my lord," she ejaculated.

"No, no, I speak the simple truth. And pray do not 'my lord' me in that fashion. I repeat, it is the simple truth."

So the earl.

"It is cruel, wickedly cruel," cried Edith. "I am not a slave exposed for sale in open market, to be knocked down to the highest bidder. I am a woman, with a woman's right to choose and to refuse."

The earl smiled and looked on admiringly, as he might at a tame panther whom he had stirred up into momentary fury.

"Unfortunately, Edith," he replied, "you only exercise your privilege of refusing."

"And if it is my will to do so?" she answered, with a haughty gesture.

"Oh, your will is not to be thwarted. But remember, it is your fifth season."

"And were it my fifth, what then?"

"Why, then it would be too late for remonstrance."

"It would—it is," she answered. "I have outgrown the ambition of becoming the slave of any one of these beings on whose necks I now set my feet. As I am, all flock about me, kneel to me, and offer me the homage of their attentions and flatteries. So long as I treat them as I do treat them, with indifference, with scorn, with a proud assertion of the privileges of my sex, they will continue to fawn on me, and to make me their idol. And the homage of these beings whom I despise has become necessary to me. I cannot live without it. I can no more exchange it for the neglect which is a wife's bitter portion, than I can live without the air I breathe. A wife! No; I shall never marry—never!"

She paused for a moment, drew herself up to her full height, and a strange, sarcastic smile played about her mouth as she added:

"Who was that who said 'my business is to make widows, not wives'? A famous hero, was it not? Whoever it was, I honour him, and I say, 'my destiny is to break hearts, not to win them.' I shall never love, never accept a suitor; but I will reign as proudly and hold my own against all comers, as bravely as I ever did for all that."

It was the language of the soured heart. Love, turned to bitterness at the loss of its object, prompted this outburst, which fairly took the earl by surprise.

As he knew nothing of Edith's real attachment for the lost Lionel, so he had no means of accounting for the change it had wrought in her.

"You are not serious, Edith," he said; "this is the mere passionate outbreak of the moment. You cannot contemplate thwarting all my plans for your happiness in this ridiculous fashion. Better retire into a convent at once."

"What," she exclaimed, with bitter sarcasm, "go into my grave alive? No; I live—live as I have never done before, admired, courted, flattered, worshipped, adored for my beauty, feared for my brilliance; but cold, cruel, and inflexible. The statue, garlanded with flowers and wreathed with incense, remains a statue. I will remember that, and amidst the homage of the world remain—marble!"

The earl's fine face, framed in the silver hair that hung down to his shoulders, assumed a serious aspect.

"This comes of the excitement of that foolish woman and her mad prophecies," he said.

"Father! Can you think so meanly of me?" was the rejoinder.

"To what, then, am I to attribute it? You were ever proud; but this is not pride—it is desperation."

"Be it so," she answered, mournfully. "I—"

She paused.

The entrance of a servant caused both speakers to glance towards the door.

"Mr. Ewen Ascott," the servant announced.

The next moment the lawyer of Silverthorpe presented himself, hat in hand, and smoothing down his iron-grey thatch over his low, wrinkled brow.

"Ascott!" cried the earl, in astonishment. "Yes, my lord—beg pardon, Lady Edith," and he bowed to her—"I am compelled to take you by surprise. Come across, post, to lose no time. You have heard the news though, very likely?"

"The news?"

"About David Hyde's disappearance."

As he uttered the name, the earl was so greatly agitated that his very lips grew white.

Edith noticed this with astonishment. She had no clue to the secret cause of it.

"The whole affair," Ascott continued, "is enveloped in mystery. He leaves his home—rides over to Silverthorpe, and is seen no more."

"Seen—no—more?"

The words trickled through the white lips one by one.

"Next morning his horse was found straying, with blood on the saddle. His hat is also found, under circumstances which lead to the suspicion of foul play."

"Suspicion? Mere suspicion?"

The lips which uttered these words quivered. And the eyes of the tall, broad-shouldered earl, averted from meeting those which peered out from under the lawyer's bushy brows.

"Mere suspicion," Ascott repeated. "Strong, too."

"Against whom?"

"The person who, on the face of it, was most likely to owe the man Hyde a grudge."

The earl's lips parted; but no word came from them.

"That man," the lawyer went on, "is his adopted son, Ambrose Copley."

The colour came back to the earl's face in a rish.

"They found the hat on him?" he asked.

"Yes."

"A clear proof of guilt, of course! Perfectly clear! You think so, don't you?"

"No."

"What?"

"I repeat—no."

"But what would you have as proof of guilt in a case of violence if the possession of the victim's hat is not to be taken as proof?"

Ewen Ascott smoothed down his hair, slowly.

"Yes," he answered slowly, "but it may be a proof of innocence. Would not a guilty man be the very first to rid himself of such a piece of evidence? And an innocent man to refrain from doing so?"

The earl turned impatiently away.

"If you're going into quibbles, there's an end of it!" he exclaimed. "But what more—you have not told us all the news?"

"No; not all. Whatever happened to David Hyde, happened in a particular street in Silverthorpe, and in that street lives a man not unknown to your lordship."

Again the pallid lips; again the nervous twitching; again the look of agitation and distress.

"Not—unknown—to me?" his lordship gasped.

"No. For I have met him in this house."

"Here?"

"Yes. You have not forgotten Fabian Temple?"

The Lady Edith rose to her feet. She thought of the card on the grass—a card which Bolden had picked up in Temple's rooms, and had dropped by mere accident in the park—the gipsy's prediction, and her astonishment was unbounded.

"What of him?" she asked eagerly.

"Simply that by a strange coincidence, David Hyde disappeared in the street in which he lives, and on reading David Hyde's will we find it wholly in his favour, leaving him the bulk of the property."

"And he becomes a wealthy man?" Edith demanded.

"Yes."

"He will once more assume a position in society?"

"Doubtless."

"The gipsy woman was right then! We shall meet again. And he may exercise an influence over my future!"

She uttered the words spontaneously as they rose to her lips. Ewen Ascott heard them with amazement; but on the earl's ears they fell unheeded. The announcement just made had awakened a new and painful train of thought in his mind: all absorbing considerations rushed upon him with overwhelming force, and turning to Ewen Ascott, he motioned him towards the door.

"Will you favour me with a few minutes' attention in my private study?" he asked.

The lawyer assented, and they retired together.

"With what end?" was the question that naturally presented itself to the Lady Edith's agitated mind.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GATE-HOUSE PRISON.

If I have sinned, I am not worthy you:

If you have doubts, you are not worthy me.

Wilson.

THE excitement prevailing at Silverthorpe was intense.

It is not difficult to raise a storm in a tea-cup, a pebble cast into a pond ruffles its entire surface, and in small towns events of very little magnitude are sufficient to create a startling motion.

Such events as those described above, as may be supposed, quite sufficient to agitate the little community to a painful degree.

The mysterious disappearance of Miser Hyde was in every mouth.

For twenty miles round his was a familiar name, and the stories told of him—of his boundless wealth, his beautiful daughter, and the reprobate son of his adoption—invested it with romantic interest. Of course many of the tales were utterly without foundation, and those incidents which had any truth in them were grossly exaggerated. But all exaggeration was thrown into the shade by these new and undoubted facts.

The miser's adopted son had presented himself suddenly in the neighbourhood. He had gone to the house of his benefactor, where, as old Abner could testify, there had been an angry altercation. That same night the old man had vanished—literally vanished—and the graceless son, Ambrose Copley, had been found with torn, blood-stained clothes, and with the hat of the missing man upon his head. To account for the condition in which he was found, he had been able to devise no story more plausible than that he had seen a stranger attacked by a ruffian in the street in which the traces of violence had been found, that he had interfered, had been set upon, struck down, and had found it difficult to escape with his life, and that he had picked up in mistake for his own.

A lame, improbable story that, all agreed.

Where was the human being with the motive Ambrose Copley had for attacking the old man?

Here, as people sagely argued, was a young reprobate who had gone down that day with the express purpose of screwing money out of the miser. That money he had failed to get; he had only succeeded in raising an angry storm, as the result of which he had been compelled to quit the house. Up to that time, as he had every reason to expect, David Hyde's will was in his favour. Immediately on his quitting the place, Hyde set out for Silverthorpe, and made direct for his lawyer's. Now, why should he take such a step at night, and in the heat of anger, except to make some alteration in his will—some alteration which it was only natural to suppose would be adverse to his adopted son's interests? At all events, Copley himself would be sure to put that construction on the matter, and what more natural than that an angry and desperate young fellow, whose character was none of the best, as rumour went, should set upon the unguarded man, and put it out of his power to strike him out of his will?

Everything confirmed this view of the case.

The only difficulty lay in accounting for the manner in which the young man had disposed of the body of his victim.

That David Hyde was dead no one doubted; but it is not easy to murder a man in a public street and dispose of his body so effectually that no traces of it are to be found.

People predicted that the dead man would be found in a well, or would be seen floating in the river, or be discovered in an empty house, or form an impediment in the town drainage. But days went on, and nothing of the sort happened, and then the very prophecies admitted themselves at fault.

At this crisis a new fact came out, and served to turn public attention in a fresh direction.

The news which Ewen Ascott had mentioned at the earl's became noised abroad. It was at first rumoured, then ascertained beyond all question, that David Hyde had left the bulk of his property to Fabian Temple, the remainder going to his daughter Vida.

"Impossible," was the general verdict.

But there was the will, drawn up by Ascott, the lawyer, fairly copied by Temple, as part of the work by which he got his living, duly signed and witnessed, and open to inspection.

No one could doubt the reality of the will. It had been discovered stowed away in an old escritoire in the room in which Hyde passed his days, and the greater part of his nights, and which he had left double-locked when setting out on the journey which had resulted so mysteriously. Of that escritoire he kept the keys. No one had access to it but himself, and it had to be broken open in the presence of the police in order to get at its contents, consisting entirely of papers, and comprising the will.

About the genuineness of the will so found there could be no question.

Ewen Ascott identified it, and admitted that he had drawn it up.

And in the will so drawn there occurred again and again the name of Fabian Temple.

It was remarked as curious that as the lawyer read over the document of his own drawing, each time he came to this name, he examined it curiously through his double glasses, and each time with an expression of face quite inexplicable to those who witnessed it.

So when he had read it through in Fabian Temple's presence, there was a strange look in those sunken eyes of his—a strange and a meaning look as he said:

"That is David Hyde's will. I am not prepared to dispute it!"

That same evening, however, and by the very next train, he had set off to the earl's, and his clerks knew that in going there he had taken the rough draft of Hyde's will in his pocket.

This latter fact was naturally unknown to the general public; but the discovery as to the will caused quite a diversion in Ambrose Copley's favour.

In small towns people are intimately acquainted with each other's affairs, one's neighbour generally knowing more than one's self, and it began to be asked:

"Why should old Hyde have chosen Fabian Temple as his heir? Who knew anything of their intimacy or of any reason for such a preference? Temple gives it out now that they were bosom friends, but when did they meet and in what way did their friendship show itself?"

And then everybody recalled the strange coincidence as to the marks of violence and the pool of blood being discovered in the very street in which Temple lived, and on the very morning when David Hyde disappeared.

Above all, there was the spot of blood on the door-

First it whispers, aided by shrugs of the shoulders and liftings of the eyebrows, people spoke of this. Then the scandal grew loud, and the coincidence

was openly canvassed. So openly that Temple could hardly fail to be aware of it, and to feel that the finger of suspicion was pointed at him—in a hesitating, uncertain way, but still pointed. To which circumstance he on his part appeared profoundly indifferent.

Meanwhile Ambrose Copley was detained at Silverthorpe, and consigned for safe keeping to a room over the town gate, with grated windows, which had formerly constituted a state prison, in the days when high treason, petty treason, and other fancy offences of a like nature disgraced the statute-book.

The authorities there felt that all the circumstances warranted that step, and he offered no objection to it. Reckless in everything now, he was reckless as to this. It was only another of the buffetings of fate which he was born to endure. So he put it, and placidly gave himself up to his destiny.

"Besides," he argued, "a man can only be in one prison at one time, and whether it is a felon's or a debtor's, what matters? Except that in this commercial country a felon is rather better treated than a debtor."

He was in this mood—this angry, railing, indifferent mood which had become habitual to him since his unhappy youth—when the constable who had charge of him announced a visitor.

It was evening, and he was leaning against the barred window looking down into the road, which wound away toward the setting sun, losing itself amidst the woods and meadows; and the rising logs of light.

Turning in surprise at the announcement, he heard the rustle of female garments; and then Vida Hyde stood before him.

"Vida!" he ejaculated, with a sudden choking of the throat at the sight of her.

She waited till the door had clanged to behind her, then raised her veil, and presented a white, shrunken face, and eyes red with weeping.

"You come here—to me?" the young fellow asked, in an incredulous tone.

"Yes, Ambrose," she replied, in a voice full of anguish. "I could not rest till I had seen you. I could have neither rest nor peace until—until—"

Seeing her distress he put out his hands as if to take those she raised so piteously; but she drew back as if with aversion.

"No, no, Ambrose," she said, "do not touch me. You cannot forget, even for an instant, why you are here. The suspicion against you is too terrible for you to be unmindful of it. They say you are changed, that you have grown wild and reckless; but you cannot have come to think lightly of this."

"If you speak of my imprisonment here," he replied, doggedly, "heaven knows I don't complain of that. A man's little cause to grumble at what saves him from a worse fate!"

His dogged, indifferent manner pained the gentle girl to the heart.

"It's not that of which I speak," she returned. "You know it is not that. Shocking as this place is, what is it that makes it doubly so? Ah, Ambrose, you shake your head in wilfulness. You will not understand. The charge against you petrifies me with horror, and you affect indifference to it!"

"And except for your sake, why should I not?"

"Why?"

"Yes. Have I not said, from first to last, that I am innocent?"

"You have—you have; but the circumstances—"

"And what have I to do with them?" he asked, almost angrily. "They are suspicious. Well; I did not make them so. They point to me as a criminal and a monster. Well! That is my misfortune, not my fault. Am I to feel myself a criminal, conduct myself as a criminal, and try to realize the shame and disgrace and horror of crime, because a town-full of wiseacres fancy me guilty?"

"He was your benefactor, Ambrose."

He swung aside, impatiently.

"He was. He loved you to the last."

"I thank him," he answered, with mock courtesy, "thank him for all. Would to heaven I had never seen him! I should have been a better man."

"Nay, he did all for the best. Admit that where he erred he did it for the best?"

"Well, be it so," answered the handsome youth, tossing the curls from his brow; "be it so. The best has come. It has cost him a life, and brought me to a prison. The best!—the best, indeed!"

He burst into a scornful laugh, and looked round the darkening room.

Vida trembled alike at his words and at his tone.

"Spare me, Ambrose!" she pleaded, "spare me! Remember it is my father of whom we speak; my lost, murdered father!—your father, too! And when you use those words, and act thus strangely, what can I believe but that—"

"That I am guilty?" he blurted out.

She did not answer him, but her face sank toward her bosom.

"You mean that? You believe that?" Ambrose persisted.

"I would give the world not to believe it!" she murmured.

"And were it yours to give, you would offer it in vain," he answered, angrily.

"Ambrose!"

"The woman who loves—trusts!" he retorted.

"But, Ambrose! One word from your lips—"

"And you would be satisfied? No! Since it was possible that you could doubt me, it is impossible that you should believe me innocent!"

"But I will. Indeed, indeed, I will! Only give me the assurance that you are guiltless."

"No. Not though that assurance should save me."

The stricken face of the loving woman sank over her clasped hands, and sobs, audible sobs, burst from her lips. But she said not another word. Crushed by this angry rebuff from the man who was dearer to her than all the world, she turned away toward the door, through the grating of which the constable had been a spectator of all that passed. As she reached the door it opened; she hesitated a moment, hoping, longing to be recalled, but no word escaped the prisoner's lips. So she passed forth, sobbing as if her heart would break.

"He is guilty," she gasped, as with uncertain steps she staggered from the door.

And Ambrose, hearing the door close on her, and the bolt shot into its socket, threw himself on the stone bench beneath the grated window, and buried his face in his hands.

"I'm a brute," he muttered. "Worse—worse than a brute to treat her so. But it is true for all that. The woman who loves—trusts!"

And he strove to comfort his aching heart with that miserable reflection.

CHAPTER XV.

NIGHT AT THE MOAT.

So let them pass, as in a tragedy,
O'er that stage which shall witness direst deeds.

Francis Spira.

THE gloom of evening which descended on the state-prison in the gate enveloped also a still more strange, and almost more uncomfortable dwelling-place.

In the north of England—in the neighbourhood of Newcastle—there stood a building invested with a peculiar interest.

It was singular in itself, and quite as singular in its occupants.

The name it bore was The Moat, and this was as peculiar as anything about it; seeing that there was no traces of anything from which it could be derived. Probably, however, it had in times past been a moated edifice, seeing that in the good old days few places of any importance out of cities were secure from intrusion unless guarded by a moat and drawbridge. Judging by its existing condition, the Moat had formerly been a monastery—it might even have been a monastic chapel, and this would account for many of its peculiarities.

It stood in an orchard at least a century old, but which had begun to be invaded for building purposes. Its natural appearance was that of a church with chimney-stacks added, and otherwise adapted to living purposes.

The porch had been removed, and the aperture filled in with rough brickwork, in the middle of which a modern door had been inserted. But the windows remained as of old: huge pointed gothic windows, with elaborate stone-mullions, filled up with latticed panes of a greenish tint, and innumerable in quantity.

These windows extended from the bottom of the house to the roof, and gave light to the different floors, each being visible from without.

A great portion of the place was given over to the rats and the ghosts, both of which were said to infest it; but one or two distinct families lived in it—in entirely different portions—all keeping pretty much to themselves, and all regarded with more or less suspicion by the neighbours.

It is with one of these occupants that we have to do.

On the night in question a light burned in a room on the basement, but gave it far from a cheerful aspect. The light, which was that of a lamp, simply burned in, but did not illuminate the room, which was so vast and lofty that it would have required twenty lamps to have displayed it to advantage.

The solitary light stood on a massive oaken table in the midst, and faintly disclosed bare walls of stone or plaster, dark with age, a groined ceiling, and the window occupying nearly one side of the apartment, and only partially hidden by a dark curtain of many

yards in length and width, which waved in the draught of the broken window-panes in a ghostly and unnatural fashion.

On the side farthest from the window was a huge fireplace, a room in itself, and though it was summer-time, a few logs smouldered on the hearth, their light being sufficient to disclose the singular nature of the great hearthstone. It bore some rude carving of grim character, and a Latin inscription, beginning with the ominous words, "*Hic jacet*."

The hearthstone was in truth a tombstone, and as the eye wandered from the fire round the portion of the floor of the apartment not concealed beneath the rug covering the centre, it was easy to trace out other such stones, leading to the conclusion that this was the original floor of the monastery chapel.

The solitary occupant of this strange place was a woman.

She sat near the lamp, her elbow on the table, and her chin in the hollow of her hand, thinking.

Thus sitting she came within compass of the light, which played over features that were at once beautiful and ghastly. The features were those of a woman somewhat past the prime of life, but still possessing many of its earlier charms. In outline they were perfect—the style large and masculine, but in that style faultless. There was the brow, wide and open, the eyes of an intense black (by night), the nose a perfect aquiline, the mouth full and ripe, the chin rounding up to a cleft apex. Very perfect, too, was the curve of the fine throat. Perfect all—and yet the effect of all was startling, not inviting; and this because face and throat were of a whiteness that was unnatural and ghost-like. And it was not the whiteness of marble, that might have been beautiful; it was rather that of a fungus grown in the dark, and therefore colourless. Of this also the texture of the skin reminded one—soft, smooth, but dry to a degree that sent a thrill over the sensitive frame.

The woman was attired in a dark dress of a common material, very ample and flowing, and her only jewellery was one snake-bracelet—a snake with emerald eyes.

After a while she moved her elbow from the table, and crossed her hands before her, interlacing the tips of her fingers on the dark dress, so that thus seen they were dazzling in their whiteness.

Catching sight of them, she shuddered and turned her eyes away.

"That I should come to loathe myself!" she muttered. "I who was fascinated, bewitched with my own beauty! Never did lover woo me as I wooed myself! So fair, so beautiful! Oh! the times—the times that I have covered my arms with kisses, revelling in their beauty! and now—now—I see this and I live!"

She held her hands before her, shuddering, and with averted head.

"Horrible! horrible!" she muttered. "Come to me, Abel!—quick, quick! Your sight is dim, and to you I am still beautiful. Ah! how he fingers, and this place is maddening!"

She half rose from her chair, raised the lamp above her head, and looked round. The curtain was waving and rustling: everything else was still.

Satisfied that she was alone, the woman was in the act of replacing the lamp on the table, when there was a slight click against the glass of the great window; it was repeated twice. Then there was a rush of air, which sent the curtain swaying out into the room, and as it subsided, the figure of a man stepped forth.

"Is it you, Abel?" cried the woman.

"Who else?" asked a thick voice.

"I did not know—you were in the gloom. I thought it might be—"

"Your husband?"

Her white face grew whiter.

"How dare you?" she gasped.

"And why not? Why shouldn't I say what the rest say? They've been at it again down at the ale-house. The old story. Eighty-one stone steps lead from this room to your bedroom. You know the tale! Up those eighty-one steps he plodded, that Christmas Eve, full of generous mirth; and you waylaid him, thrust him back, and left him lying a corpse at the bottom till morning—Christmas morning, you know?"

"I know that it is a base calumny. I know it, and you know it!"

"Ay, ay, hard to prove it, though, for all that!"

"Prove! Does it not prove itself? What so simple as that he should have fallen, overcome with liquor?"

"True; and on the very day when he discovered his wife's treachery! That alone might have overcome him!"

He laughed, a soft, smothered laugh, which had a ghostly sound in that desolate room.

The effect of it was to drive the woman to the

verge of phrenzy. Her tall form grew taller, and she took a step forward into the gloom.

"Are you mad?" said she, "or is all between us at an end?"

The laugh instantly ceased.

"A pleasant jest, truly," the woman cried, with an effort at calmness. "To be scoffed at as a murderer—to live in constant fear lest these idle rumours should one day bear fruit and cost me my life. 'Tis a light thing to you, Abel Gath; at the most a bare suspicion connects you with the deed; but while you laugh I suffer. No more, then. From this time forth—no more!"

With a wave of the hand, as with an imperious gesture she swept the obnoxious topic behind her, the strange woman resumed her seat.

As she did so, the man she had called Abel Gath stole forward into the light.

The rumour, which implied, as a prevalent rumour did, that the woman before him had compassed her husband's death for the sake of this man, paid no compliment to her taste. He was short and plethoric, with a face full of cunning, and bearing the traces of hard drinking and dissipation. His dead-black hair, straying in loose knots, and strings over his forehead, aided the dissipated effect. As his clothes were black, and he had a wisp of white linen about his throat, his general appearance was clerical, and he sometimes called himself, and was called, the Reverend Abel Gath—a designation to which, it was said, he had in earlier life been entitled.

As soon as he came forward, he raised the white hand nearest him—not without a shivering sensation—and pressed it to his full lips.

"Enough, enough!" she cried, impatiently, and drawing her hand away. "Your news?"

"The worst."

"What! the earl refuses?"

"Yes."

"Not of his own act. He would not dare to do so of his own act. He is advised by some one—by his proud daughter, Lady Edith. Oh, how I hate her! How I hate all women meddling in affairs like these! Why, we are penniless, then?"

"Yes—once more."

"And have you no plans, no resources? Am I to starve in this charnel house as the result of all?"

"Not while you are beautiful."

She bit her teeth, and her hands clenched, but she did not reply.

"Not while you have the wit and sagacity, and I have the courage to execute what you conceive."

"Courage! Yes, you have that, but it is I who must think, think—how I hate, how I detest thinking!"

A sinister smile concealed the eyes of the man Gath.

"That was our compact," he said. "You to plan; I to execute. And I wooed your genius and your beauty, Margaret. I made them mine."

"That you might live," she exclaimed.

"That I might live," he repeated slowly, and with the utmost complacency.

"In another man," said his companion, "such a confession would be disgraceful. Not in you. It is our privilege to have sunk below the level where anything can elevate or disgrace. To the world in which we were reared, we are as dead as those buried beneath these flags."

She pointed with her white fingers to the stone at her feet. Gath followed with his eyes, and the classic education he had disgraced enabled him to read and understand much that was dead to the woman.

"Neither exalted by fortune nor depressed by adversity," he read, translating as he went, "'Life had no terrors for him, and he approached death without dismay. His life was contentment, his end peace.' A very remarkable biography, truly," he went on, with a sneer, "right that it should be inscribed in stone, and in a language that should never die. Imagine Latin being left us for—that."

Margaret, as he had called her, fixed her eyes upon him with a stern gaze.

"Do you remember Fabian Temple?" he asked.

"Remember him! Why, what in the name of coincidence—"

"Stay! Do you remember that he once translated those very words, and said he should be proud to have them for his epitaph. I laughed at him then; starve me and leave me to my own thoughts much longer, and I shall think as he thought. Contentment and peace! God! How long it is since I forgot what those words meant!"

"Absurd!" cried Gath, bursting with a sudden idea, "but your mentioning Temple is most strange. He has come in for a great fortune."

"And the dowdy woman you helped to make his wife, will become a woman of fortune?"

"Yes."

An angry and an evil light came into the eyes that

flashed from the white face. She paused a moment, her lips working convulsively, then she said:

"What if to that 'yes' I answer 'no.'"

"What! You have some purpose to serve in preventing this?"

"Only the purpose we have ever had. We must live."

Their eyes met. And as Gath saw the angry, evil glow in those of his wife, he began to rub his hands slowly, and a smile of satisfaction overspread his sinister face.

(To be continued.)

BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "Self-Made," "All Alone," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Oh! winds, that have made us your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial, endearing report
Of a land we shall visit no more.
When we think of our own native land,
In a moment we seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand,
Soon hurries us back to despair.

Cooper.

The storm-clouds were well-nigh at repose on the Desert Island where our three friends had been cast away.

The wreck of their ship still lay high and dry upon the rocks where she had struck.

So fast was her position, with her keel impaled upon the sharp, horn-like points of the rocks, that neither winds nor waves had as yet power to break her up or lift her off.

It seemed as if she must remain there until she should gradually perish and go to pieces by the drying and warping of her timbers in the hot sunshine.

This state of affairs continued for many months. Every day during this period, Justin, Britomarte, and Judith, passed over the reef of rocks from the island to the wreck, fed the animals there, and brought away as many of the stores as they would carry.

But as the way was long and the work toilsome, and as twice in the twenty-four hours the reef of rocks was covered with water, it was impossible for them to make more than one trip a day; and so it took them a long time to remove all the stores—a time of much anxiety it was, for they were in constant expectation of some terrible gale that would break up the wreck.

At length, after many weeks of labour, they had brought all away from the wreck—everything that could possibly be of use to them on their Desert Island; and this, of course, included all the real necessities of life, and stores of provisions enough to last them for years.

All these things were carefully stowed away in some of the caves and grottoes with which their mountain abounded.

It was not until all the stores were secured that Justin proposed to bring away the animals; for they had been better off on the wreck as long as there was anything for them to eat, and therefore they had been left there till the last.

It was a work of difficulty, almost amounting to impossibility, to get these beasts over the causeway, but Justin was not a man to yield to difficulties.

He carried the sheep over one by one on his back; and when they were all penned in the caves, brought the half-grown pigs over in the same way.

Judith carried the little pigs one or two at a time, and Britomarte took charge of the baskets of poultry.

When they were all safely housed in the caverns of the mountain, one almost insurmountable difficulty presented itself.

It was at the close of a warm summer day, and Justin, Britomarte, and Judith, stood at the opening of the cavern where the animals were confined. Justin, panting, had just thrown down the well-grown pig he had brought upon his back over the causeway. Judith had taken away the rude plank that closed the opening of the cavern.

"Now all the creatures are off the wreck except the cow; I am afraid we shall have to give her up," said Justin.

"Ah! bad luck to ye, what would ye be leaving me cow for; to have me pining for me milkie every day iv my life?" exclaimed Judith, indignantly.

"Well," laughed Justin, "shall we leave her to die of starvation on the wreck?"

"Sure, and why would ye leave me Crummie to perish intirely for want iv vittels, and meself to pine away and die for me milkie?"

"But how to get her off, Judith? Am I expected

to bring her over on my back, or will you undertake to do it?"

"Sure, what should all Crummie not to walk over on her own legs! Faix, she'll not be troubling ye to tote her!"

"But can she walk over? And will she do it? Remember, Judith, that we could neither coax nor drive the sheep nor the pigs over."

"Lord! kape ye! Is Crummie a shape or a pig? Bad luck to the shapes and pigs, they gave us a dale iv trouble, so they did! But Crummie, the darlint, is nayther a shape nor a pig!"

"Judith, I am not doubting the docility but the power of your favourite. Can she be coaxed or driven across the causeway, up and down the slippery sides of those ravines, and through those streams?"

Judith favoured him with a half-compassionate, half-contemptuous look, and then answered:

"Sure, ye know a dale iv Latin, and sayemanship, and ology; but never a taste do ye know of cows! How will I get Crummie over, do ye say? Aisy enough! I'll not say that a cow can go wheriver a man can, for a man can climb a tree, which I never saw a cow do yet; but I will say that a cow can go wheriver a mule can, and a mule is more sure-footed than a horse itself! And so this is the way I'll get Crummie over: I'll just lave her fasting for a whole day, and next morning I'll just mix a pigglin full of warrum male and wather, with a taste iv salt into it, and I'll just give her a sniff iv that same, and call her afther me, and carry it before her, and sure she'd follow me to the end iv the world! Lave me and Crummie alone for knowing what we are afther."

"Judith, you are a female Solomon. You deserve to be made premier of this island!" said Justin, laughing.

"And sure what's a premier itself?"

"The premier is next in power to the king or queen of a country."

"Faix, then, if ye're king, and she's Quane, and meself premier, we're like an army that's all major-generals, so we are!"

During this conversation, Britomarte had been standing apart, with her elbow resting on a projecting crag of rock and her beautiful head bowed upon her hand, in an attitude of deep dejection.

Justin, whose eyes were never long withdrawn from her, seeing her state, passed immediately to her side, and whispered gently his anxious inquiry:

"Britomarte, dearest, what troubles you?"

"My utter uselessness on this island! I have neither your strength nor Judith's practical experience!" she answered, humbly.

"Let us reduce that statement to its lowest denomination, as they used to say in school. You cannot carry a fat sheep weighing sixty pounds over your shoulders for a couple of miles, as I did. And you cannot make a warm mash to coax a cow over a rugged causeway, as Judith can. That is what you mean, Britomarte. But why should that trouble you, dearest? You can do many, many things that neither I nor poor Judith could ever accomplish," said Justin, soothingly.

"Perhaps so, in the world of men and women. But here, on this Desert Island, where physical strength and practical experience are of the utmost importance—nay, everything—my powers, whatever they may be, are utterly thrown away," she answered, bitterly.

"No, no, Britomarte, dearest, no powers conferred by the Lord are ever thrown away. By His providence for some wise end, you have been cast away on this island. The same Creator who endowed you with your glorious gifts of mind and spirit, has assigned you this Desert Island as the scene of your labours, or of your—probation, Britomarte. If you cannot give much, you may receive much. If you cannot teach much you may learn much, even here, dearest."

"I am learning humility, I think," she murmured, as if meditating aloud; "if I could be of a little use in our small world, I should be content."

"You are of use. You have accomplished your share of the work in bringing the stores from the wreck. You have laboured to the utmost limit of your strength. It is not to be expected that your physical strength should equal that of a man like me, or a peasant woman's like Judith. Besides, exquisite beauty and great strength are never united in a woman, and you are too exquisitely beautiful to be very strong."

"I really wish, Justin, that you would not say such things to me."

"I do not say this to flatter you, Britomarte, for it is too true to be flattery; nor even to please you. For I know that it will not; I say this merely to remind you that Providence in His wisdom has chosen to endow you with alluring beauty instead of with conquering strength. You complain of your uselessness. I have tried to show you that you have been use-

ful according to your strength. And I will go further than that, Britomarte. I will show you that, even if you had never lifted a hand to help us in our common need, the mere fact of your presence is to me the one great, divine, ineffable blessing, for which I can thank the Lord sufficiently. It you were not here, dearest, I suppose I should still, from a sense of duty, try to sustain life; but it would be in pain, sorrow, and wretchedness. But you are here, and the Desert Island is a blooming garden, and life is delightful, and the future is full of blessed promise. It is for you that I live and think and toil! And in return I only ask—ou to exist, to accept my services and rest content," he concluded, with all his loving, loyal soul beaming in his eyes and thrilling in his voice.

"Justin! Justin!" she sobbed, dropping her head upon her hands—"would to Heaven you had never had the misfortune to meet me and love me; Then you would not have followed me here and been cast away upon this desolate shore. You did not deserve such a fate, Justin!"

"No, I did not deserve so much happiness. But God is good. And I thank him, day and night that all these things have happened to me! that I met and loved you; that I followed you and have been cast with you on this desolate shore," said Justin, fervently.

"Ah!" muttered Judith, who from her stand-point saw this little interview, without hearing it—"ah, sure if there was only a priest convenient to marry them, all would be well entirely! But sure where's the good of courting, itself, when there's never a priest to the fore?"

And having made this philosophical reflection, Judith put up the board and the prop that closed the opening of the cavern where the animals were confined, and then turned and said:

"And now bid yer good lave, will I get supper, sure?"

"Yes, Judith, it is time," answered Britomarte. And all three took their way to the front of the great grotto that was Britomarte's own private apartment.

As yet they had been too busily engaged in the more pressing duty of securing the stores to think of building houses. But the great rocky mountain was full of deep holes; so full, that it might be compared to an immense castle with huge walls and small cells.

These holes were situated all up and down the sides of the mountain from base to summit, and they afforded complete shelter from the weather, for our three friends, their cattle, and stores.

The largest and best of these holes or caverns was Britomarte's grotto, which was occupied solely by herself and her attendant Judith.

In fine weather the family meals were prepared in the open space before this grotto; in bad weather they were prepared in the grotto itself, which then became the family parlour.

Further up the side of the mountain, in a small irregular hole, Justin slept at night. And in the holes along the base of the mountain the animals were penned and the provisions were put away.

Justin had fitted up Britomarte's grotto with so much care and skill, that he had made it as comfortable, if not as elegant, as a lady's boudoir.

Let me describe it:

This grotto was a vast natural cavern in the base of the rocky mountain. It had an opening about eight feet high by two wide, which did duty as a doorway.

On the outside it was overgrown with a variety of wild, luxuriant, tropical plants, vines, and creepers, whose roots were fastened on every crevice of the rock where there was any soil to nourish them, and whose branches, tendrils, and flowers wreathed the front.

Having passed through this beautifully-forested entrance you found yourself in a light, cheerful place about the size of a large drawing-room. Its walls and floor were of glistening white rock; and the first were as regular and the second was as level as could be expected in a natural cavern.

The roof was high and dome-like, and terminated in a skylight or natural fissure, through which, at noon, the vertical sun-rays streamed.

But this fissure which let in the daylight, was too irregular to admit the rain, unless it came from a certain quarter.

To obviate this mischance, Justin had climbed to the top and covered this fissure with glass, brought from the ship. So that now it admitted the light only.

Justin had also dismantled the ladies' cabin of the wreck to furnish and decorate Britomarte's grotto. A thick carpet was laid over the floor. A round table was placed upon it; and covered with a woollen cloth, and accommodated with an oil-lamp, which was lighted for the family every evening.

At the far end of the grotto was constructed two bed-places, which were neatly made up and curtained off from the other portion of the apartment.

On the right-hand side of the entrance, against the wall, was a side-table, supporting a row of shelves, filled with all the books that could be found in the wreck—the missionaries' books, the captain's books, the doctor's books, and the sailors' books—in all, between two and three hundred volumes.

On the front of the table below these bookshelves stood Britomarte's own portable writing-desk, which had been found uninjured in her state-room. In the table-drawer was a good stock of stationery, which had also been rescued from the wreck.

On each side of this table and bookshelves, which occupied a central position against the wall, stood a row of cushioned chairs.

On the left-hand side of the entrance stood a large bureau that had been removed from the captain's cabin.

Above this bureau hung a large looking-glass, and on the top of the bureau, on one side of the glass, stood an elegant dressing-case, and on the other side a beautiful workbox, both completely furnished.

These had been taken from Mary Ely's state-room, and had so come into the possession of Britomarte. Near this bureau, against the wall, stood a large, comfortable sofa, that had been taken from the ship's saloon, and slowly and labouriously lugged by Justin and Judith across the causeway, on to the island, in the same way that all the heavy furniture and stores had been transported from the wreck to the shore.

The Reader will not wonder that this great labour occupied many weeks. But Justin went at it cheerfully, and accomplished it successfully. There never lived a knight of chivalry who would have undertaken more stupendous tasks in honour of his lady-love than would Justin for the love of Britomarte.

And so he had performed almost impossible labours in the fitting up of the grotto. But I must finish the description. All along the walls were hung such pictures, maps, and other decorative articles as could be found on the wreck.

In all the corners were stowed away chests of clothing, table and bed linen. Each side of the centre table were placed easy chairs and foot-stools.

Never, from the days of the first shipwrecked passenger to the present time, was a cast away so well provided with the comforts of a home. But then, it must be remembered, that almost everything was saved from the wreck, and that Britomarte had a devoted subject, who would have broken his back, if necessary, in her service.

At a short distance from Britomarte's bower was a clean hole in the rock, where Judith kept her cooking-utensils and crockery-ware, and where Justin had set up the cooking-stove which he had brought piecemeal, plate by plate, from the cabin of the ship. Outside of this hole stood the deal table on which, in fine weather, the family took their meals.

All these were merely temporary arrangements for the convenience of Britomarte during the weeks occupied in the removal of the stores and the animals from the wreck to the shore.

It was Justin's full purpose, as soon as the stores should be secured and the animals penned, to build a comfortable house for Britomarte and to fence in pasture-lands for the animals.

CHAPTER XL

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a season of rest,
And we to our caverns repair.
There's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought,
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

Cooper.

WHEN Justin, Britomarte and Judith reached the front of the grotto, Britomarte said:

"We will have our supper inside, Judith. I will go in and light the lamp and lay the cloth, while you make the fire and put on the kettle."

"Very well, madam. And will I fetch some cold ham, or fry the chicken that was kilt this morning?"

"I don't—" began Britomarte. Then turning to Justin with an entreating glance, she said—"You have worked so hard to-day. And you must be hungry. But you never do anything, or say anything, for yourself. Do tell us for once what you would like."

"Anything at all!" said Justin, gratefully. "It is not of the slightest consequence what I eat."

"I do not believe it is to you; for I have tried to find out your favourite dishes—but in vain! for while you eat well of everything, you eat heartily of nothing!"

"That is because I have such a wholesome appetite" laughed Justin.

"And so you will not tell us what you like?"

"I like anything—everything!"

"Then, Judith, cook a little of 'everything' and put it on the table," said Britomarte, archly. "And then we shall be sure to be right."

"Bedad, meself will do that same right willingly. Lord kape me! I am hungry enough to ate Crummie, so I am!" said Judith, scuttling away to her kitchen, as she called the hole in the rock where she cooked.

"Come into the grotto, Justin. The fowls are heavy and unwholesome to-night," said Britomarte, kindly.

For Justin, in the delicate respect for the beautiful, proud, self-willed creature who was so dependant upon him, never ventured into the sanctuary of her apartment except at her special invitation.

He was glad enough of the invitation, and grateful enough to accept it. He followed her into the grotto. She was very kind to him this evening.

There was a respectful tenderness in every look, tone, and act, bestowed upon him.

"Light the lamp for me, please, Justin," she said.

She asked this because she knew how happy it made him to render her the slightest service, and if she forbore to say "dear Justin," her tone was as soft as if she had said it.

He lighted the lamp and trimmed it carefully, and set it on the table which she had in the interval covered with a white damask cloth.

"Take that seat, please, Justin," she said, pointing to one of the easy chairs, while she sank into the other. "We can sit here and rest, and talk a little while before Judith brings in the supper."

"Thank you, sister. I am only too glad to be permitted to do so," he answered as he took the indicated place.

She had said, "we can sit here and rest and talk;" but for the present it seemed to be only "rest." A strange, heavy, forbidding silence fell upon both—such a silence as falls upon nature when all her elements are charged with storm.

Closely, but covertly and most reverently, Justin watched her. She sat with her elbow resting on the table, and her beautiful head bowed upon her open hand, and her eyes drooping.

Her rich, dark-brown hair had fallen forward like a veil, and half shaded her pale and pearly brow and cheek. She looked exquisitely lovely as she sat there, and Justin heaved an involuntary sigh—a deep sigh, that found its way to her ear, and perhaps to her heart; for presently she spoke, though without looking up, or in any way changing her position; and her voice vibrated with emotion as she said:

"Justin, you do not believe that I am ungrateful for all the invaluable services you have rendered me?"

"Britomarte! no; but I estimate those services as nothing. They were performed to please myself; and gratitude is not the sentiment with which I would inspire you, Britomarte. But you have placed an embargo on my lips! You have exacted a pledge from me that I will not speak upon the one all-absorbing subject that fills my heart and brain, both day and night. It is with you to give me back that pledge! Will you do it, Britomarte?" he earnestly inquired, leaning forward to look in her face, and hoping much from the gentle spirit that now possessed her.

But she averted and bowed her head.

"Will you give me back my pledge, Britomarte? Will you let me speak on the one forbidden subject?" She bowed her head lower, and wept softly.

"Will you, dearest?" he urged.

"No," she answered, slowly, in a tone so low that he had to stoop nearer to catch her words. "No! what would be the use? We are here in this lone isle, cut off for ever from all the human race. If we loved each other ever so devotedly, we could not marry, since here there is no law to bind our union, no minister to bless it. We could only be to each other what I am always willing we should be—a dear brother and sister."

And her head dropped upon the table, and she sobbed.

"Britomarte, loved dearest love! my only love! look up. I will not distress you. Heaven knows I would suffer anything rather than give you an instant's pain," he said, kneeling by her side, and laying his hand reverently on her bowed head.

"Oh! Justin, Justin, what a curse to love one like me!" she sobbed.

"No, it is not! it is a great blessing—a divine blessing—to love—only to love—though one should never be beloved! But, Britomarte, mine own, are the reasons you have given, the absence of church and state to bless and bind our love, the only obstacles to our union?"

"No, they are only the nearest obstacles."

"If, by some intervention of Divine Providence, we should be rescued from this Desert Isle and re-

stored to our native country, then—then, Britomarte, might I hope that you would bless me with your love and hand?" he pleaded, in a low, earnest tone.

"No, no, never," she sighed.

"May I ask you the reason for this strange, unnatural persistence?"

"I can but give you the one that I have so often given—My soul is pledged never to love or to marry while the present laws of marriage, so degrading to woman, exist."

"You may pledge your soul never to marry, but never to love," Britomarte, does not lie within the volition of you, will," said Justin, gravely.

"It seems to me that you are breaking the pledge from which I have not yet released you, Justin," she said, more sorrowfully than reproachfully.

"Heaven forgive me! I am! But 'woe is me!' he added, with a grim smile, "how can I help it? Britomarte! when I do not break it in the letter, I break it in the spirit every hour of the day and every minute in the hour! However, I will drop the obnoxious subject, and talk of something else!

"Woman's Rights, which is always an acceptable theme to you, my young reformer! I have often wondered, Britomarte, at your earnest, ardent, enthusiastic championship of woman, and hatred of her natural enemy, as you have been pleased to call man! I have suspected that all this must have originated in some very bitter wrong suffered at the hands of man either by yourself, or by some woman very dear to you," said Justin.

"A Daniel come to judgment! Yes, a Daniel! Oh, wise young judge, how I do honour thee!" said Britomarte, mockingly, as by an effort she threw off the tender gloom that had lowered over her heart.

Justin started up and walked the floor several times before he returned to his seat. He looked hurt, and it was no wonder that he did.

"Justin," said Miss Conyers, more gravely and kindly than she had last spoken, "you are right! but a very slight acquaintance with history might have taught you that every hero and reformer who has keenly felt the wrongs of his kind, or of his country, and undertaken and accomplished anything to right them, has been first stung to action by some great private wrong of his own or his loved. M. Lucretia had not fallen a victim to Sextus, Brutus and Collatinus never would have been aroused to free Rome. If Gessler had not put William Tell's son's life in peril to gratify a whim, the great Swiss patriot never would have been goaded to rise and deliver his country from the Austrian despotism."

Judith suddenly appearing before them with the supper tray caught a few words of the discourse, and having legendary knowledge enough, to understand a little of it, had quickness of wit enough to add her little mite.

"I believe you are quite right, Judith. And, Justin, what I meant to say was this: We are such egotists that great public wrongs must come home to us individually before they can be felt, hated, and resisted successfully. Some time, Justin, I will tell you of the bitter wrong against those whom I love more than life, which first opened my eyes to the wrongs of woman, and armed my soul against the despotism of man. Some time I will tell you, but not now. Judith wants to serve the supper."

"I shall wait impatiently to hear it, Britomarte," he answered.

Judith arranged the supper neatly on the table, and waited on the two while they eat. And when they had finished, Judith carried out the tray to her kitchen, and there she enjoyed her "mate and tay" in solitude as she always preferred to do.

When she had satisfied her appetite, and set her kitchen in order, she returned to the grotto and joined Justin and Britomarte, and passed the evening with them, according to her standing order and her daily custom.

And this is the way in which they occupied their time. Justin selected from his store of books a volume of Shakespeare, and read from those old, familiar, but ever new and fresh pages.

Britomarte took a wisp of crocheting cotton, and instead of using it in the manufacture of fancy mats and tidies, applied it to the more useful manufacture of stockings for the little family, and so seated herself quietly for the evening to the old-fashioned work of knitting.

Judith sat down to darn the table linen. With great foresight, Judith had separated the old linen from the new, and had packed away the latter, saying:

"Truth we must make the old things last as long as possible by mending, before we begin upon the new things, for fear the stock will give out entirely before we die, and where should we get others itself?"

So passed the evening until ten o'clock, when Justin closed his Shakespeare, and Britomarte rolled

up her knitting, and Judith put up her work, and took down the Bible and laid it on the table.

Then Justin read a chapter in the New Testament, and Britomarte sang a hymn, in which the other two joined, and they closed their evening service with prayer.

And Justin withdrew to his own hole in the rock, and left Britomarte and her attendant to repose.

This was a fair specimen of their evenings on the island.

The next day, as the season was now waning into autumn, and the mornings, as well as the evenings were chilly, Britomarte and her companion arose early and set the grotto in order, and laid the cloth there for breakfast; Judith went into her kitchen to make the coffee, and Justin brought in a bunch of small birds that he had shot upon the mountain to be cooked for the morning meal.

After breakfast was over, Justin and Judith left Miss Conyers to keep house in the grotto, and went out to the wreck to try to get the cow off.

Britomarte occupied herself in the meantime by preparing not very dainty dishes for her brother Justin against his return.

She supposed that he would be very late ere he returned; and she was right.

The task he had undertaken was difficult and tedious; not that Crummie was unamenable to reason or insensible to warm milk; but that the way over which she was to be coaxed was long and almost impassable even by a cow or a mule.

It was late in the afternoon when Britomarte saw the procession winding around the base of the mountain towards the grotto. And a queer procession it was!

First came Judith, walking backwards, with her eye thrown over her shoulder to see where she went, and her hands holding a piggie of muck under the nose of Crummie, to coax her along.

Next came Crummie, falling on slowly but hopelessly after the muck, that was always under her nose, but out of her reach.

Last came Justin, walking behind Crummie, and holding a light switch in his hand, with which he occasionally hurried her lagging steps.

Thus driven from behind and coaxed on before, Crummie, like her betters, made some little progress towards her destination.

Britomarte laughed heartily as she saw this procession approaching the grotto.

Not until they had reached the open space in front of the grotto did Judith set down the piggie, into which Crummie immediately thrust her longing nose.

Justin threw away his switch. Judith struck her arms akimbo and panted. Britomarte continued to laugh.

"Ah, bedad, ye may laugh, so ye may! But if ye had such a day as me and the mather has had wid this baste iv a cow, sure ye'd not be like laughing, so ye wouldn't! Truth, the legs is ready to double under me wid the weariness! Let alone a twist in me back-bone and a creek in me neck wid walking starn foremost and glowering over me shoulder to see the way," grumbled the Irish girl.

"Never mind, Judith. I have got the supper all ready! coffee and 'tats' rice cakes and biscuits; and roast chicken and broiled ham; and all you have got to do is to eat it," said Miss Conyers, kindly.

"Ah, bedad, I must look out for Crummie, the crature, first! Sure I've been inticing her all this long way wid a warm muck, till it has got as cold as death itself now! And I must mix her something fresh and warm to comfort her!" said Judith, heaving a deep sigh and going off to her kitchen.

"Justin dear," said Britomarte, softly, "you are quite tired out. You exhaust yourself in our service, Justin. Go now into your little den, where you will find clean towels and pure water, refresh yourself with a wash, and then come down into the grotto, where supper is ready and waiting for you."

Justin snatched her hand, pressed it to his lips, and started off to do her bidding, feeling that he would have undertaken twenty times as much labour as he had performed that day to win such kind words from her lips.

He soon returned, and, panted, another: calm, if not happy evening, in the society of his best beloved.

On the following morning Justin began his buildings. Among the necessities brought from the wreck was a box of carpenter's tools, and a grindstone. First he put his tools in complete order. Then he went to work and cut posts and split rails and fenced in a lot where the cattle, whose health was suffering from confinement, might roam without danger of straying away.

With only his own labour and Judith's occasional help, it took Justin a long time to complete this piece of work.

And in the meanwhile the season still waned, and

the climate grew cold and dark. The wet season, the winter of this latitude, was rapidly advancing upon them—so rapidly that Justin judged it best to defer the building of his house until the winter should be passed.

He went to work instead to make the grotto into winter-quarters for Britomarte.

Where the table had stood he placed the cooking-stove that had been rescued from the wreck. And all the pipe he could find or manufacture out of rough materials with rough tools, he put upon it, until it reached the fissure in the roof, by which the smoke could escape.

"This arrangement, while it makes you more comfortable, will bring us all into closer quarters, my dearest, since it is the only fire that we can have," said Justin, as he lighted the first fire in the stove.

"Oh, Justin! as if I could be so selfish as to object to that. My brother! the grotto is yours, not mine. And if it were solely mine, you should be as welcome to it as I am myself. More so! more so, Justin!" she earnestly answered.

He pressed her hand and turned away. Sometimes her tender words and looks gave him less pleasure than pain, because of the barrier that was between them.

Life grew very monotonous during the wet season of many months.

In the spring Justin commenced the building of his houses; but on account of rough material and imperfect tools, and for the lack of help, the work progressed very slowly.

Thus more than a year passed since they were first cast upon the Desert Island.

They had given up all expectation that any roving ship should come near enough their isle to discover the signal flag that they always kept flying from the summit of the mountain, though every day Justin paid a visit of ceremony to that flag, and took a look out at sea through his telescope.

Nearly two years had passed, and no incident worth recording had happened, when one night their island was visited by a most tremendous hurricane. It raged all night, and only subsided in the morning.

At midday, when all was over, Justin, Britomarte, and Judith, walked up to the top of the mountain to see what had become of the wreck that had remained there for twenty months, high and fast upon the rocks, and perishing slowly by the dry rot.

Justin arranged the telescope and took a sight. And what did he see?

Not the wreck! for the last vestige of the wreck was broken up and carried away by the winds and waves in the last night's tempest.

He saw a sail! a strange sail, with a strange flag, bearing down upon the island.

(To be continued.)

A LYONS SURGEON ON ENGLISH SURGERY.—M. Desgranges, an eminent hospital surgeon of Lyons, lately delivered a discourse, at a meeting of a learned society of that city, with the following title—"On the Public Charities in France and England." Among the topics alluded to, there is one in which the speaker has taken, it seems to us, an erroneous view of the motives of British operating surgeons. He says:—"We Frenchmen value life as much for the poor as the rich; as surgeons, we have the same regard for a patient who will after recovery remain helpless, as for the artisan who, after being cured, can resume work. In England matters are not always considered in this light. In that country, tormented with incessant activity, and ever striving after utilitarian results, the value of a man is reckoned upon his productiveness; hence, when disease has rendered him useless, he is considered to have no right to refuse the boldest operative measure, meant to fit him for work, and restore his social value. It is, therefore, surprising that this way of viewing matters, which is very illustrative of the national character, should favour the venturesome attempts which have spread far and wide the scientific renown of English surgery?"

MEXICONE.—I should infinitely prefer Mentone to Nice as a winter residence; it is thoroughly Italian still, which Nice is not. For a great invalid, requiring some comfort, the latter town must offer more attractions; it is very much like a fashionable English watering-place—Brighton or Torquay, with perhaps less available good inland scenery than the latter place. The air is said to be very stimulating; I cannot judge from my own sensations, as I fell ill there from my heavy cold; but after the bitter wind which swept in great gusts over the place, making one fancy, even in the side valleys, that winter had come back again, Mentone was a very pleasant contrast, in its sheltered nook, nestled under the wooded hills which offer endless charms to the visitor. I do not know that it has a club-room or a library; but it offers a bright fresh contrast to English life, while it possesses every comfort and necessary for quiet

country enjoyment. When C. W. was there last year, she spent a froth walk for every day of the month they spent there; and glorious indeed must be the views of the Mediterranean seen through ever-fresh settings of greenery. *Chacun a son gout*. There are some people who would prefer the Promenade des Anglais, Nice, where you can exchange bows with all your acquaintances and have an uninterrupted view of the water. I am only speaking of Nice proper. There are many lovely villas in its environs, and a more beautiful distance to be explored; but such a residence necessitates a large expenditure, a carriage and servants; whereas, at Mentone, lodgings near the sea, or apartments in a good hotel, and a donkey, make you free of all the enjoyments and charm of the place. Forgive this long prating, but I like to have a clear idea in my own mind of the relative attractions of Nice and Mentone as winter residences, and certainly, if we should ever try either of them, C. and I should choose the latter.—*Beaten Tracks, or Pen and Pencil Sketches in Italy*. By the Authoress of "A Voyage en Zigzag."

A DAUGHTER TO MARRY.

By the Author of "Butler, Burke at Elton," &c.

CHAPTER XXV

The bell strikes one! we take no note of time, but from its loss, to give it then a tongue. So wise is man, as if an angel spoke! I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright, it is the knell of my departed hours. Where are they? With the grave beyond the flood!

Young.

The Honourable Valentine Bridgeman was utterly at a loss to account for the stupid condition—almost amounting to insanity—in which he found Maurice Fenwick.

His first thought was that he had so far forgotten himself as to drink too much; but Valentine had seen many men intoxicated. He had studied the signs and symptoms, he knew the vacant expression, the bleared eyes, the parched lips, the staggering gait, the silly speech, the obstinacy of the drunken man.

He did not find all these portrayed to his satisfaction in Maurice Fenwick's demeanour.

He was puzzled. Mrs. Sandford Saville had been watching her unhappy victim from a distance.

She noted well the gradual falling of his intellectual faculties, and the prostration of his bodily strength, which was sympathetically affected.

Unmoved she witnessed all this, and calling to her daughter, who was conversing with Fanny Freemantle, said:

"Come, Felicia, with me. Let us visit your father and his friends in the card-room."

"Oh! do take me, Mrs. Saville!" cried Fanny Freemantle.

"Certainly, if you will be kind enough to come."

Mrs. Saville, followed by the two girls, purposely made a circuit which she knew would bring her to that portion of the wall against which Maurice was leaning.

Felicia's keen eyes at once detected her lover, and she felt her heart sink within her as she saw those inexplicable signs which had so terribly perplexed her brother Mortimer.

What in the name of goodness could be the matter with him? Only an hour or so before they had been together. Maurice had opened bottles of wine for them in the Bower of Roses, and had drunk with them. Could he have exceeded the limits of moderation? Her knowledge of his character at once emphatically answered no, but she wavered in her opinion as she continued to gaze upon him.

Mrs. Saville, as may be expected, did not fail to make use of the opportunity.

She first looked at Maurice and then at Mortimer, almost at the same time beckoning the latter, who approached her, wondering.

"Who's that man?" inquired Mrs. Saville.

"Fenwick," replied Mortimer. "I saw him with you an hour ago. It seems that a change has come over the spirit of his dream. I can't for the life of me make him out. He rolls about and jeers and jabs just like an idiot. Never saw such a thing in all my life, and I've seen a few men screwed, too."

"Go up to him, Mortimer," said Mrs. Saville, simulating an interest in him. "He is a friend of the family, you know, and the scandal will be so great. For goodness sake do something. Can't you prevail upon him to go without any fuss?"

"I've tried all I know. Tried my hardest, but he won't move. There he stands and jabs for all the world like a Punch and Judy show."

"Is that your *preux chevalier*?" said Fanny Freemantle to Felicia.

"Yes," was the laconic reply.

"Oh! for shame. Why don't you teach him better manners? Fancy one's *cher ami* getting tipsy! Oh! isn't it dreadful!"—and look there. Poochay and Peevils are looking on and laughing!"

"Odious creatures!" said Felicia.

"Well, who wouldn't laugh? I declare I am dying to indulge my pent-up laughter. How helpless the man looks. I never saw one more completely stultified."

"Mamma," said Felicia.

"Well, my dear."

"May I—would it be proper for me to go and speak to him and ask him to go quietly home? If it would—"

"It is entirely a matter of taste, my dear," replied Mrs. Saville. "As it happens, this part of the room is fortunately nearly deserted, though if we stay here long we are sure to have a crowd after us. If you think yourself justified in—"

"Oh! mamma, don't talk to me like that when I want your guidance," cried Felicia.

Mrs. Saville pretended not to hear this remark, for, turning to Fanny Freemantle, she said:

"Is it not sad to see a man forgetting the respect he owes to everybody, and losing all his self-esteem at the same time. I assure you it pains me as much as if he were my own son. But then, you know, we must make allowances."

"For what?" demanded Fanny Freemantle, raising her eyebrows.

"Mr. Fenwick is only the son of a country apothecary."

"Indeed! I was not aware of that."

Felicia could not bear these taunts and innuendoes any longer.

Goaded to fury, exasperated beyond endurance, she hastily approached Maurice, and looking him hard in the face with tearful eyes, said:

"Maurice—Mr. Fenwick—do, pray go home. Mortimer will go with you. Be advised by me. Go home. All will be forgotten in the morning, so few have seen you at present. Do go home with Mortimer."

Instead of replying to this earnest exhortation, Maurice looked stupidly at her, and burst into a loud, silly laugh, which so shocked and annoyed her that she went back to her mother blushing to the temples, and trembling with rage and vexation, and feeling more mortified than she ever remembered to have been.

"Oh! mamma, it is dreadful to see any one like that," she said.

"So it is, dear, but you brought the rebuff on yourself. I do not altogether regret it, for it will teach you the value, and I may say, the necessity of maidenly reserve. It would have been much more ladylike of you to have remained quietly by my side."

Mrs. Saville spoke in a patronizing tone, and stretched out her arms as she spoke as if taking her daughter under the wings of her protection.

Turning to Mortimer, she continued:

"Please see Mr. Fenwick home. I should not like this sort of thing to continue much longer—it is too disgraceful. Please see to it, will you?"

"All right," replied Mortimer. "I'll put him in a cab and slip him off to his lodgings. Don't put the shutters up till I come back."

"How vulgar Mortimer is becoming," that young gentleman's mother observed to Felicia, who was intently watching Maurice—with his white tie disarranged, his gibus hat put inartistically on his head with careless indifference—Maurice of the vacant look and still more vacant laugh. How different from the Maurice of a few hours ago!

Mortimer took him by the arm, and dragged, rather than led him from the room.

When he had disappeared, Felicia heaved a deep sigh, and walked away with her mother and Fanny Freemantle, who rattled away in her own peculiar fashion about the breach of propriety they had just witnessed.

"Don't you think, dear Mrs. Saville, that a man looks very ridiculous when he is tipsy? What a goose a man must be to do it. If any one I know and cared for—oh! ever so little—was to do so before people, I do really think I should never more speak to him again."

Some one approached Felicia and begged the honour of the next dance.

With a feeble "Yes," and a cold, stony smile, she gave him the desired permission.

As she walked away with her hand resting gently on the arm of her partner, the Honourable Valentine Bridgeman made his appearance, and looking considerably put out at finding Felicia was engaged, and so, in fact, was Mrs. Saville.

"Ah, Mr. Bridgeman," she exclaimed, "we are delighted to see you. Where have you been? Playing cards, I presume. I really think that horrid card-room ought to be abolished. It always deprives us of the society of the wisest men."

Valentine was about to make some appropriate reply, when a servant in the Saville livery approached bearing something on a silver salver.

It was a telegraphic message.

"For you, sir, if you please," he said. "A man has just brought it from your hotel."

Carelessly Valentine took up the telegram, saying to Mrs. Saville:

"Have I your permission?"

"Oh, yes, certainly," was the reply.

With the same carelessness he broke the seal and read the three or four lines it contained.

His cheek turned pale—ashy pale—and he crushed the telegram in his hand, betraying all the evidences of strong emotion.

"Pray may I ask if anything has occurred—if anything is the matter?" said Mrs. Saville.

"My father died at nine o'clock this evening."

"Died! Is it possible! Then you are Lord Linstock."

"I suppose so."

"What a shocking loss! How terribly sudden! Permit me to assure you of my most cordial sympathy. How precarious human existence is! What a dreadful bereavement!"

These disconnected sentences fell in quick succession from Mrs. Sandford Saville's lips. She was only too glad to think that the husband she intended for her daughter was a peer of the realm, instead of a simple Honourable, and that he would have the vast estates in his own possession.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Saville, if I run away somewhat abruptly. But this news is so unexpected that I am completely overcome. I am hardly myself. I am not, indeed."

"Do not think of apologizing," said Mrs. Saville, in reply to the young man's agitated remarks.

Making a hurried bow, Valentine turned round, and the next moment was gone.

With joy in her heart, Mrs. Saville sought her husband to make him the recipient of what she did not hesitate to call good news.

CHAPTER XXVI

All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep,
My fevered eyes I dare not close,
But stand aghast at sleep,
For sin had rendered me
The keys of hell to keep.

Good.

Mrs. SANDFORD SAVILLE felt proudly triumphant, for she thought her daughter would marry the representative of an ancient house, the annals of which were glorious, and the ancestors, whose pictures hung in the long galleries at Hadlow, she knew had made their names famous in history.

With a little tact and management she felt certain that she could bring about a marriage between Felicia and Valentine Bridgeman, now Lord Linstock.

She considered that the Fates were propitious, because no sooner had she rid herself of Maurice Fenwick, in what she called a clever manner, without bringing the stain of blood upon her soul, than Lord Linstock died.

Of course, his vast estates—she did not know how they were encumbered—passed to Valentine, so that Felicia would make herself with one who was not only noble but rich.

The colour rose to her cheeks and she flashed disdainful glances around her as she passed up the brilliantly-lighted drawing-room in search of her husband, giving a word to this one, a friendly grasp of the hand to another, and speaking a few unmeaning phrases to some party about to take their leave.

As the mother of Lady Linstock, she would be able to take a higher place in the fashionable world than she had hitherto been able to reach—doors which had been ordinarily closed to the wife of the wealthy city man would fly open as if by magic to the mother of the peeress.

Then all her ambitious wishes would be gratified, and she would have gained the top of fashion's tree.

Mr. Sandford Saville was nowhere to be found. He had left the card-room, and one of the servants, in reply to questions put to him, said that he had seen his master go downstairs to his study.

Mrs. Saville's face darkened as she heard this announcement, and taking advantage of an opportunity she also left the ball-room and sought her husband in the retreat he had chosen.

He was sitting in an arm-chair with his feet resting upon a footstool, smoking a handsomely-carved meerschaum pipe, the burning tobacco in the bowl of which emitted a lazy cloud of slowly-curling smoke. His face wore an air of pre-occupation, if not of absolute dejection.

Looking up and perceiving that his wife was a intruder upon his privacy, he assumed an angry, but

did not venture to make any decided remonstrance, knowing very well that he would infallibly get the worst of any verbal encounter that might take place.

Mrs. Saville was not moved in the slightest at beholding the sad, careworn look which sat upon his pallid countenance.

She had come down expressly to scold him, and she did not intend to spare her indignant comments upon his conduct.

"Upon my word, Sandford," she exclaimed, "you grow worse and worse. Fancy the master of the house leaving the ball-room as you have done. It is useless for me to try to make a position if I have to contend with your eccentricities."

"I only came downstairs, my dear, to have a quiet pipe," he remonstrated.

"This is not the time for it. You know that it is three o'clock and the bulk of the people will not go away till five or six, therefore it is your imperative duty to be on the spot. If you are not a gentleman by birth or education, you can, it is to be hoped, assume the semblance of gentility at my dictation."

This speech roused Mr. Saville a little from his lethargy. Putting his pipe down upon the table, he looked steadily at his wife, and replied:

"My dear, you are the last woman in the world who ought to speak of antecedents."

Apparently there was nothing in this remark at all calculated to arouse the wrath of the lady to whom it was addressed. It had that effect, however, for Mrs. Saville's face became as red as fire, and she had great difficulty in suppressing her rage.

"You dare to taunt me!" she cried, with all the fiery force of one in whose breast slumbered a dash of the tigress: "you—you, who are no better than a midnight robber, a prowling thief, the stealer of other people's money—you, cowardly reptile, weak-minded, contemptible wretch that you are! I could place the felon's fetters on your wrists this very night did I choose to do so."

Mr. Sandford Saville had evidently touched a tender chord, and he did all he could to deprecate and allay the storm he had called into existence by the utterance of an ungarded speech. He turned pale, and said, in an anxious tone:

"I wish to goodness, my dear, you would not be so passionate, and that you would talk in a lower key, for were the servants to overhear your not very flattering observations I might get into trouble. Just be good enough to sit down, will you, and listen to me. Since you have introduced a disagreeable subject without your usual delicacy, I will say a few words that I have had on the tip of my tongue for some time past."

"Say what you like, only be as brief as you can, for I shall be missed from the drawing-room."

"Well, to oblige you, I will put the matter in a nutshell. I suppose the door is shut, and that we are not likely to be interrupted?"

"No—no. Go on."

"Ever since the little affair at the bank," continued the manager, "I have not been myself. If Frank Barclay—poor fellow!—had not been arrested for the crime which I committed, I should have gone about with a better and easier conscience; but I swear before heaven—and I am not in the habit of taking emphatic oaths—that I have not had a moment's peace since Frank Barclay was committed for trial!"

"You cannot—"

"Nay, hear me out," said Mr. Saville, holding up his hand at his wife's interruption, in order to check her. "I cannot sleep; I cannot eat; I am afraid to think; and come what may, if the jury find Barclay guilty, I will step forward and proclaim his innocence—I will, so help me, heaven!"

Mrs. Saville looked aghast.

"What!" she cried, with flashing eyes and heaving breast; "have you no courage—no self-respect—no self-love?"

"No," he replied, shaking his head in a melancholy manner. "No—no—no; it is all gone—all knocked out of me by the force of recent events!"

"You cannot be so mad, so insensate, as to mean what you say, Sandford! Tell me that you only made that declaration about giving yourself up and saving Barclay so that you might frighten and annoy me! Tell me that you didn't mean it, there's a good man, and I will forgive you everything. Speak the truth, and say you didn't mean it!"

"I have spoken the truth," he replied, solemnly.

"You have?"

"Yes, I have, as I hope for mercy for my sine hereafter. I will make atonement should it be necessary. I could never look a man in the face again if I allowed that poor fellow to be carted away to gaol, to pine away and die in penal servitude."

"Yes—yes! That sentiment is all very fine," said Mrs. Saville; "but you seem to forget that the choice is between you and Barclay—one of you the law must

have. If you save Barclay, it is you—*you*—that will be carted away to gaol, to pine in penal servitude. How will you like that? How will you like working in chains all your life, away from me, from your children, from every one?"

"I cannot help it. Perhaps the Almighty will support me under it; but save Barclay I will, come what may—*recal culum*."

"You wring my heart," said his wife, passionately, "and at the same time you enrage me to such a pitch that I could take a dagger and stab you to the heart. Do you know that you are ruining us all with your silly hamby-pamby philanthropy? You may, as you say, owe a duty to Barclay; but do you not owe a duty to your wife and family? Is it right to sacrifice these, because a terrible weight of shame and degradation will fall upon us? Poorly's prospects will be blighted for ever. Have you forgotten we have a daughter to marry?"

Mr. Saville was strangely moved.

He loved his family, and he knew, as a practical man, that what his wife said was true.

If he gave himself up to the law-officers, and was placed in the felon's dock on the crown side at the Old Bailey, every one would turn their backs upon the Savilles; who would, to a great extent, become social outcasts and human pariahs.

Many years, perhaps a lifetime, would they have to live in quarantine before they could purify themselves sufficiently for a pardon to be accorded them. The whisper of scandal would always follow them wherever they went, and such remarks as "There are the Savilles"; "You remember the great bank robbery, don't you? Ah, then I needn't enter into particulars!" would be made.

"Heaven bless Felicia! she is a good girl," he said, in a lachrymose tone. "Yet I am convinced that she would not endeavour to dissuade me from my intention. I am positive she would urge me to take the step, although in effect it would make her an orphan. Heaven is good, and would take compassion on her!"

"I have no patience with you, Sandford," said his wife, with great irritation displayed in her voice and manner. "It is quite distressing to hear you talk. I think I should be justified in consulting a medical man about your sanity, for really you cannot be quite right in your head. I have heard you say that madness was known in your family!"

Mr. Saville laughed coldly, almost harshly, as if the idea of being thought a lunatic was novel to him.

"Hear what I came downstairs to tell you," continued Mrs. Saville.

"Yes."

"Lord Linstock is dead!"

"Dead?"

"Yes; and consequently Valentine is the present lord, inherits all the property, and is a man whom Felicia could marry at any time, if she only could be induced to take the trouble; no one ever catches a big fish without some exertion. I know from my own observations that Mr. Bridgeman has a great fondness for Felicia; and yet, when everything is going on well, and all our prospects are bright, you want to dash the cup of joy and satisfaction from my lips, and plunge me into an abyss of despair. I conjure you to pause. Think, think, Sandford, of the misery you will bring upon us!"

"I must do my duty," was the stern, inflexible reply.

Regulus taking leave of his family to return to captivity in Carthage could not have shown more firmness.

Mrs. Saville was about to say something, but she checked herself, looked down at the carpet for a short time, and presently exclaimed:

"You are out of sorts to-night. You will think differently in the morning. I am positive you do not really wish to bring an avalanche about our heads. Come upstairs with me. Come!"

Reluctantly he obeyed, gave her his arm, and they ascended the grand staircase together.

Hardly had they entered the room, however, before Mrs. Sandford Saville clutched her husband's arms violently, exclaiming, in a hoarse, terrified whisper:

"Look, look, Sandford! Do you see that man?"

"Where, my dear?"

"There—there; to the right of you."

Mr. Saville followed the direction indicated by his wife's eyes, and saw the tall man who had appeared at the Mansion House when Francis Barclay was on his preliminary examination.

"I see him. What of him?"

"It is Zadok—Zadok Hoskisson, the man who—but you know the story. How came he here? I fancied him in Australia. Oh, that the earth would open and swallow him up! I have ever dreaded him. My prophetic soul has all ways brought him before me and predicted this meeting. Oh, it is awful!"

The individual to whom Mrs. Saville gave the name of Zadok Hoskisson bowed stiffly to her, and approaching her, said:

"Permit me to congratulate you on your good looks: this climate evidently agrees with you, Mrs.——"

He hesitated, adding:

"Shall I say——"

"Saville!" she cried, hurriedly.

"Oh, do not be alarmed," continued Mr. Hoskisson, calmly. "No one is within earshot, and I am sure your amiable husband would forgive a little familiarity from an old friend. Why, you may almost look upon me as your guardian!"

He laid peculiar stress upon the word "guardian," and Mrs. Saville became the colour of scarlet.

"By the way, I must ask you to pardon me for talking of business, but this is such an admirable opportunity that I do not like to neglect it. The fact is, I want to open an account at the Royal Bubble Bank; and if I should be compelled, by the exigencies of commerce"—here he smiled sardonically—"to overdraw my account a few thousands, of course you will not object to Saville's honouring my drafts, which, as manager, he can easily do."

"Certainly not," replied Mrs. Saville. "I have no doubt that you may rely upon Sandford's kindness to arrange that for you in accordance with your wish."

"Thanks—that is all I have to ask. I wish you good night. Saville, I shall see you in the city in the morning."

He turned coolly on his heel without waiting for Saville's reply, and left husband and wife looking at one another blankly and with consternation.

Mrs. Saville was the first to recover her self-possession and equanimity.

"You must do as he asks, Sandford," she said.

"It is all very well to say that, but——"

"What?"

"It's a criminal matter, if they prove culpable negligence on my part."

"What will that matter to you if, as you say, you are going to save Barclay?"

"I am half distracted between one thing and another," said the unhappy man. "But I suppose it will be all the same a hundred years hence—that's one comfort."

"Zadok could do me so much harm. You must conciliate him. I hope his appearance is not a bad omen. I hope that it does not prognosticate my fall. But the clouds are gathering around me, and there is no telling what the future may reveal."

With these philosophic commonplaces on her lips, the lady sat down *à la dowager*, and devoted her attention exclusively to her friends, who were beginning to take their leave.

(To be continued.)

It is reported that at the Exhibition of 1867 the Emperor himself will be an exhibitor. He will exhibit some model lodging-houses for working men.

A PROPOSAL has been made to attach, as travelling refreshment carriages to trains on long distance journeys, a first-class dining-saloon, capable of dining about thirty people, and an adjoining carriage, which would comprise a bar, larder, and kitchen. Passengers are to enter at one station, dine, and alight at the next.

SOME few nights ago, the keys of the Probate Office, Doctors' Commons, were abstracted by some person unknown. Three or four days afterwards, on the dust being removed, the keys were found, as bright as ever, in the dustman's cart. On the morning that the keys were found, a large piece of charred wood was thrown into a kitchen of the office on the basement, in which a quantity of clothes were drying. This would naturally lead to the conclusion that there was a design on the part of some one or other to make a bonfire of the wills and titles to property of half the people in the kingdom.

AN INDIGNANT LADY.—An anecdote of Queen Charlotte, which, though not an instance of weariness of etiquette, shows, that, while she was usually a slave to her own rules of form and ceremony, she could violate those of politeness and delicacy. Before there were any railroads in England, the Royal Family used to travel to and from Windsor in carriages and four, and Queen Charlotte would sometimes honour one of her nobility by a call in passing, and take lunch at the house. On one of these calls, she partook of some cake which she praised very highly. Some time after, the lady of the house sent a loaf of the same kind of cake as a present to the queen. This she repeated, at the same season, every year, until she received a message from Her Majesty that she should like a little more sugar in her cake. "Does she take me for her confessor?" exclaimed the offended lady. She sent no more cake to the Queen.



[CAPTAIN JOHN BOHUM MARTIN.]

THE LATE CAPTAIN MARTIN.

THE late Captain John Bohum Martin, whose death took place, as our readers know, on the 11th of January, when the ship *London* foundered in the Bay of Biscay, was in his forty-seventh year. Having from the age of boyhood always expressed a strong desire to select the sea as a profession, with the view of carrying out this wish, he was entered as midshipman in the East India ship *True Briton*. He remained in that ship four years, making several voyages to Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta, and passed through the various grades of service with assiduity and credit, diligently attending to the study of navigation in its most scientific parts, in which he became thoroughly proficient.

In the year 1840 he was removed as third officer to the ship *Southampton*, then a celebrated fast passenger-ship trading to the East Indies. Having served the prescribed period in that capacity, he passed successively through the further steps of service, principally in the *Maldstone*, till he was appointed, in the year 1852, to the command of the *Essex*, and remained in her till 1856. He then took the command of the *Suffolk*, a vessel expressly built for the Australian trade, and designed with all the skill, appliances, and cost requisite to make her the safest and fastest sailing-clipper afloat. At that period there was active competition among shipowners, both British and foreign, for the Australian trade, in consequence of the great number of persons passing to and from Australia on the first discovery of the gold-diggings, as well as the quantity of the precious metal and other valuable cargoes carried; it was therefore the practice to place the finest ships of the different owners on the same station, to start at the same time and for the same ports.

It is evident that scrupulous care was necessary to select the most trustworthy, skilful, and experienced officers for the service, and no owners had a better opportunity than Messrs. Wigram of obtaining the most efficient commanders, as from the great number of their vessels, which were all of the best kind, able men were ambitious to take command in their service. The first passage of the *Suffolk* to Australia was made in an unusually short time, and bore favourable comparison with the other celebrated clippers, such as the *Marco Polo* or the *Kent*, etc.; and a continued career of success enabled her to take rank before all other ships in the same trade. Captain Martin made, altogether, ten voyages in the *Suffolk* to Australia and back, all very successful, sometimes sailing twice round the world in the short space of twelve months. No fatal mishap or irregularity ever befel this vessel, but on the first trip, when she was caught in a violent hurricane, which carried away her topmasts, and for a short time, crippled her; but the damage was speedily repaired while at sea, and the passage afterwards made in the usual rapid manner. As a mark of esteem for the energy and skill he displayed on this occasion, a handsome testimonial was presented to Captain Martin by the mercantile portion of the city of London on his return to England. Captain Martin was therefore an officer of high reputation, and well conversant with the service, when he became commander of the *London*, towards the end of 1864. He made two very rapid and successful voyages with that ship to Melbourne and back. The third voyage was scarcely commenced when it was interrupted by the terrible disaster we now lament.

Captain Martin has left a will, by which he bequeaths the entire of his property, amounting to about 30,000*l.* to his mother for her life, and after her death

to his brothers and sisters. He was unmarried. He left three brothers, one of them a civil engineer in large practice, and two sisters. Through life he bore the reputation of being a singularly disinterested and noble-minded man; and by his last acts he fully sustained that reputation, and left a memory which will be honoured as long as true gallantry continues to be appreciated. When Mr. Greenhill, the second engineer, described his last interview with the captain, he was well-nigh choked with emotion, and Mr. Clifford Wigram, one of the owners of the *London*, shed tears at the recital.

Our portrait is from a photograph by Mr. Hugh Patterson, of Plymouth, taken about ten years ago.

A PICTURE.

OUT on the beautiful lake my light canoe glides swiftly o'er its deep blue waters! While the sportive wind, as it dits from shore to shore, fans into existence innumerable tiny waves which appear to pursue the wind in its aerial flight! Beautifully appears the lessening shore in its bordering of green trees and luxuriant pasture fields!

Seriously appears the surrounding lake of deep, transparent waters! Beautiful, yes, pre-eminently beautiful! I exclaim, as I drop the oars, and allow my boat to drift as wind and waves direct.

Ceasing to apply the oars, and giving my whole attention to the contemplation of the lovely scene presented before my view, I am doubly impressed with its earthly grandeur, and gaze, enchanted, on its surpassing loveliness.

Wherever my vision wanders, it meets no object to mar the beauty of the scene. And, as I gaze across the lake towards the distant shore, I perceive a radiantly-winged butterfly fluttering its wings in the noontide sun, as it wings its way in thoughtless security, far out upon the waters.

Leisurely it pursues its way towards my boat, which is as slowly drifting towards it; so leisurely that it seems to note the workings of the sunbeams as they rest upon its gold-tinted wings. A moment, and it hovers in the air above my boat, spreading forth its broad wings to sport with the passing wind.

Ah, thoughtless butterfly! in your all-absorbing gaiety you fail to notice the commotion of the waves beneath you, which bespeaks the presence of an adverse wind; but remain in blissful ignorance of your danger, until the two winds, meeting where you are poised in the air, hurl you like a falling leaf upon the waters; in vain you strive to regain your former altitude; you only continue to sink nearer and nearer to the waters, when, as you make one last effort at self-preservation, you are hurled by the obdurate winds upon the waters to perish.

Ill-fated butterfly! I exclaim as I reach forth my hand to rescue you from the destroying waters. But, alas! as I would enjoy the pleasure of seeing you revive again to animated life, as I hold you in my hand, I am not permitted to enjoy that pleasure, but am constrained to experience the sadness of seeing you make a few faint movements of thy lustrous wings, one faint convulsion of thy delicate form, and all is past! Thy innocent life is euded, and thy onerous being is all that remains to tell the story of thy gay existence.

And, let that story be as pleasing as it may, it cannot speak so expressive a moral as the occurrence of thy death portrayed. And that occurrence, too, which was so sadly simple, yet its illustration was as truthfully sublime.

A sublimity, which, if viewed aright, shows the errors of the gay and thoughtless world; illustrates in the fate of one insectile life the destiny of thousands of people, who start out in life as gay and thoughtless as the butterfly, continuing their pleasant course so long as the wills of Fortune and the fickle smiles of pleasure waft them onward; but so soon as fate ordains their meeting with adversity they find themselves lacking the moral strength to endure its calamities—the buoyancy of spirit to dispel its hypochondria—and are borne down by their calamities to perish where erst they wandered forth in gaiety and mirth.

L. V. H.

THE Ambassadors of Morocco gave 10,000 francs to the poor prior to leaving Paris. It seems a hard tax and hardly noble to pinch strangers and send round the hat for the poor; for it is sending round the hat if it is known to be a custom.

CALMS in the atmosphere contribute in the highest possible degree to the production and propagation of epidemic disease. We read in Maitland's "History of London," that for several weeks before the plague made its appearance in London, in 1665, there had been an uninterrupted calm. Dismarebroeck, in giving an account of the plague at Nimwegen, mentions a similar condition of the atmosphere.

MILK SUGAR.—Milk contains a peculiar species of sugar to which the sweetness of milk is owing. When the curd is separated in the making of cheese, the sugar remains in the whey, and may be obtained in the form of crystals by boiling the whey to a small bulk, and setting it aside to cool. This sugar is hard and gritty, when crushed between the teeth, is less soluble and less sweet than cane sugar. In Switzerland and some other cheese countries, it is extracted for sale, but the manufacture and consumption of milk sugar is on the whole very trifling. In plants it rarely occurs, the acorn being almost the only common vegetable production in which it has, as yet, been detected.

ALI-BEN-IDDEM.

CHAPTER IV.

As the sun was setting, on that same day, a young man stood upon an island of the gulf, about a mile from the Egyptian shore, and four or five miles south of Haschid's residence.

His form was tall, sinewy, and of a build that supplies alone prevented from being massive.

His complexion had been bronzed by wind and sun, and his feet hardened by arduous toil.

With his long, dark locks flowing back on his shoulders, with a soul in which the grand old heroism of other days was blended with the nobler sentiments of our more refined epoch, with features that seem to have caught the deep and earnest expression of the Greek gods, with that simple majesty of bearing which belongs to noble and heroic men in all ages and nations, and with eyes of fire from which every glance was an indication of the most dauntless courage.

No observer could have failed to see that he was one of those lion-hearted and strong-handed representative men, who ennoble and glorify the whole race.

He was Yusef Kader, a sponge-gatherer, and the only son of an aged couple who lived in a little cottage on the mainland.

The boat lay near the off-shore end of the island, full of sponges.

He had been gathering them since noon, and his countenance, as he finished dressing, and prepared to go home, was expressive of satisfaction at the result of his labours.

"I have done well to-day," he thought. "Let the rest be with Allah!"

He stepped into his boat, and was about to set sail for the mainland, when his attention was attracted to a small sail coming down the shore, and headed in such a direction as to pass him.

Its solitary occupant halted our hero, and rode but a few rods from him.

"As busy as ever, eh?" muttered this man, as he glanced at the sponges. "You're lucky."

"Well, Abdul, you may share my good fortune, if you choose. Come and help me gather this lot and I'll divide with you."

The face of the new-comer brightened at this generous offer.

He was the only son of a widowed mother, residing near the Kaders.

He was rather feeble in both mind and body—in fact, a good-natured, half-witted, inoffensive fellow, whom our hero had frequently assisted and befriended.

"If I do it, Yusef, and feed thousand thanks to you," he declared. "Mother gets a small Toward, you know, from a man in Cairo, but it don't more'n half support us, and I shall be glad to earn all I can through your kindness. Are the sponges thick here?"

"Yes, I have found a large bed of them. You may come as early as you please in the morning."

Abdul further expressed his gratitude.

"Your offer comes handy at this time," he added, with a confidential air. "The truth is, Yusef, I am engaged to Thirza, the principal maid of the lady Isolate, and am saving all the money I can for the marriage. I have just been up to the castle to see her. By the way," he continued, gaily, "the lady Isolate and her father got home this morning from Cairo. They've had a splendid visit. They lived with the viceroys all the time they were there. Thirza says the Prince Thirza fell in love with the lady Isolate and proposed to her, and that they're going to be married."

Yusef flushed at this declaration, as if smitten a deadly blow. He asked, "Do you think the report true?"

"Certain's sure," rejoined Abdul. "I got the news from Thirza, who knows all that's going on, you may be sure. The prince was wondrous tender to the lady Isolate, and every morning gave Thirza a huge bouquet to carry to her."

It required all Yusef's self-possession to conceal the effect of these observations upon him. He was glad when Abdul, after a few further remarks, resumed his way shorewards. He mused a long time upon what he had heard, and finally ejaculated:

"Married? So perishes my dream!"

He seated himself in the boat, still musing earnestly and sadly, and the moments went by unnoticed. While he was in this abstracted mood, the elder Kader, an amiable old gentleman, came out of his cottage on the shore, walked down to the beach, took a boat, and rowed off to the island. Yusef did not look up until his father was beside him.

"How's this?" asked the latter. "Your mother and I thought something must have happened, because you did not come home."

"I was merely thinking," said our hero. "Let me show you the extent of my new sponge-bed."

He bused himself in this way a few moments, and then he became abstracted again. There was an interval of silence, during which the old man also looked thoughtful and anxious, and then he said:

"Yusef, I have not come here merely to look at your sponge-bed, but to have a good talk with you. What has come over you? You do not act like yourself lately, nor have the light heart you once did. You have become silent and thoughtful, perhaps I should say sad. What is the cause of this change? What have you on your mind?"

"Nothing that I need speak of," replied our hero, with an evident struggle with himself. "You may suppose, if you please, that I have indulged in dreams that can never be realized—that I have temporarily played the part of the worm that lingered for the star. It is enough," he added, with a stern face, "that these dreams shall no longer control me."

"Yusef! I understand you. And the possibility that you may some day be proven of noble birth, had decided me to be frank with you. In a few words as possible let me tell you that you are not our son!"

Yusef started to his feet and gazed upon the old sponge-gatherer with an air of stupefaction.

"I repeat—you are not our son! and it's high time for you to be told so. The knowledge of this fact may serve you, if only accounting for your tastes and characteristics. Listen, one morning, soon after my marriage, I was washing sponges on the beach, when I suddenly heard a faint cry behind me. Looking around I saw a baby in a basket. That baby was yourself. Where you came from, and how you were left so near me, without my seeing any one, Allah only knows. Not doubting but that there was some marvellous secret in the premises, I read the Koran steadily for six months, to see if you were not a second prophet, duly foretold, but got no light on the subject. The rest of the story is that we've brought you up, to the best of our ability, as our son."

"And you have not the slightest clue to my parentage?" asked Yusef, after a pause.

"Not the slightest. But, whatever may be the secret, you need waste no thought upon it. You'll some day be rich, and famous your goodness will win hearts and your intelligence command heads. In a year or two you'll have money enough to go into business in Cairo where your talents will have a better chance than in this humble profession."

The old man did not linger upon his communications and prophecies, but conscientiously left Yusef, and rowed slowly back to the mainland.

Our hero scarcely noticed his withdrawal, nor that the shades of night had gathered over the scene. The anguish of his soul was terrible. "What a blow!" he thought. "Not their son?" he finally said to himself. "This fact makes another gulf between Isolate and my love. Whose son am I? Honourable parents do not desert their children in such a manner. If the secret of my birth should ever be solved," he added, "the solution will only show that I am nothing."

The moon rose upon the scene and lighted up the gulf with weird beauty as the moments passed away, but Yusef's boat still lay under the shadow of the island, and he still sat there and wrestled with his great sorrow.

The silence resting over the scene was at length broken by the creaking of blocks aboard ship, and Yusef started to his feet and looked seaward.

He saw that a large schooner had hove-to, not more than a quarter of a mile from the island.

"It must be that strange craft I have seen cruising about the gulf during the last few days," he thought.

"I believe there's some mischief bound up in her appearance in these waters."

It was indeed the vessel belonging to Ali-ben-Hadad. Yusef watched the strange craft awhile, and then relaxed into the reverie from which his arrival had aroused him. He recalled the kindness of his foster-parents to him, and remembered how his reputed father had toiled to send him several years to the best school in Cairo, and he felt that with such proofs

of affection he had no reason to give way to complaints and regrets.

In the midst of his reflections he heard a boat coming from the mainland, and his quick ear instantly detected that its occupants were not rowing with the noisy and hearty manner of his professional brethren, but appeared to be moving as silently as they could.

The next instant a dark object was outlined in the gloom, and every moment grew more clearly defined on his sight, and he soon made the outlines of three men, and noticed a fourth figure in the midst, which he could not so clearly perceive.

Yusef instantly saw that some villainy was afoot, for the men were heard speaking in suppressed tones, and their movements showed that they had a prisoner of some sort in their midst. He had barely time to secure an ear and secure himself under the foliage on the shore, when the strange boat grounded on the island ten rods above him, and the three men leaped upon the sands, bearing in their midst a woman. As this movement was made, the watcher heard one of the men say: "If you will keep silent, lady, I'll remove the scarf from your mouth. You can't be heard here. Besides, your absence has not yet been discovered, and may not be for hours. Silence."

The attention of our hero became wholly fixed upon the scene before him.

"Some base iniquity's going on," he thought. "Would that I were armed."

He could see the pistols and scimitars of the three men flashing in the moonlight, and their appearance was in every way that of rough and dangerous men.

They were the miscreants Ali had despatched in that direction with his captive.

The watcher continued to listen, and soon heard some from the lady.

"If you want money," the captive was heard saying, "take me back to my father. He—"

Yusef did not wait to hear the conclusion of the sentence.

He had recognized the voice as belonging to Isolate.

Unmindful of the odds against him, he leaped across the intervening space, so that, even as the girl paused in her appeal, she beheld his manly form between her and her enemies. He stood there like a lion in the way.

CHAPTER V.

Like a flash of light was the young sponge-gatherer's appearance in that darkness.

"Oh, is it indeed you, Yusef?" cried Isolate.

"Yes, lady. I come to save you. Go towards my boat," and he raised his ear. "I will cover your retreat."

It was all he had time to utter.

The three ruffians had recovered from their first surprise.

With such cries as only baffled villains can give, they drew their scimitars and attacked the intruder with the ferocity to be expected from the selected tools of such a miscreant as Ali.

One of them drew a pistol, but our hero had placed himself so directly in front of the girl that the ruffian did not dare to fire upon him, lest Isolate should be injured, and he dropped it.

And thus the contest was begun, and thus the retreat towards the boat was commenced.

Yusef needed nothing but a glance at the pale and beautiful face of Isolate, to nerve his strong arm.

His desperate efforts were not unavailing. He soon levelled his nearest and bravest assailant to the earth with a sweep of the ear.

The descent of a scimitar upon the very handle of this unwieldy weapon with such force as to cut it in two, warned him against trusting his cause to it, and he boldly and quickly sprang to the side of his prostrate foe and secured his scimitar and pistol.

"Oh, Allah be praised!" exclaimed Isolate, understanding the value of this movement. "If I could only help—"

The rest was lost in the din of the fierce struggle.

Yusef was unusually proficient in the use of the sword and similar weapons, and a brighter light came into his eyes, and additional strength to his arm, as he felt the stout scimitar in his grasp. It was such an one as he had frequently practised with, during the years he had been at school at Cairo, and as the remaining ruffians sprang towards him, hounding each other on with fierce cries, he met them with such a torrent of blows that they were unnerved and confounded.

"Allah! what a manner of man is he!" exclaimed one of them. "This is no mere sponge-gatherer. Now for him, both together!"

A thrust through the body disposed of the speaker and his proposition, and Yusef's terrible attack upon the survivor drove him back towards the water. A

moment later the baffled villain wheeled and bounded into his boat, leaping into it with such force that it sped swiftly away from the shore. Yusuf might have cut him down in his retreat but did not care to do so.

"Saved!" exclaimed Isolotte, as she placed herself trustingly under the arm of her rescuer. "Oh, Yusuf, what do I owe you?"

The hand which had so recently been as stern as iron in the maiden's defence, trembled like an aspen as she grasped it, with impulsive gratitude and pressed it to her heart.

"It is I who am the debtor in this affair," replied our hero, modestly. "It is the greatest happiness I can have to serve you. Who are these men?"

"I know not—probably some of those corsairs who still infest the Arabian coasts. I was seized in the garden."

She briefly explained, and Yusuf, who had already landed, was carrying you off into a horrible captivity," said Yusuf. "A strange schooner is off the island—their vessel, no doubt."

"Yes, I heard them speak of it. Oh, what would have been my fate?"

Isolotte was further expressing her grateful emotions, when she felt a sharp pain in her side, and turned to behold a frightful spectacle. The second ruffian had arisen in his dying agonies, and endeavored to kill Isolotte, making a furious lunge at her with his scimitar, but his strength failed him at the critical moment. The weapon had merely inflicted a flesh wound, but his horrible appearance, as he stood rigidly erect, with glassy eyes, gave the girl such a shock that she fainted and sank into Yusuf's arms, at the same instant that her assailant reeled and fell dead.

"Oh, heaven, help me," moaned Yusuf, who thought the wretch had killed her. "What has he done? Speak to me, Isolotte. What can I do? Help! help!"

As he strained the helpless form to his breast in a proxy of anguish, he noticed the blood flowing freely, over her dress, and his terrible apprehensions were confirmed. Bindings a scarf about her waist, he called frantically upon her name, bore her to the water, and bathed her face, and then gazed in hushed terror upon her white features.

How like death her state seemed! And it was now, in that moment of agony and fear, that the sponge-gatherer realized the full extent of the affection which months and years of simple and casual acquaintance had aroused in his heart.

With those pallid features before him, and with that helpless form resting upon his knee, as he continued to bathe her face, he knew what it was to love—what it was to confront the terrible possibilities of losing her—what it was to have his soul and life bound up in the soul and life of another.

"Oh, speak to me, darling!" he exclaimed. "Is this death? Is there nothing—"

His emotion choked his utterance.

He could not see the loved face for the mist that gathered in his eyes.

He poured forth a torrent of loving words, addressing her by every endearing title, and more than once pressing his lips to her pale brow.

He was engaged in these blended demonstrations of terror and affection, when she suddenly moved and opened her eyes, looking upon him.

"Oh, excuse me, lady!" he said, abashed, as he set her upon her feet. "I feared you were dead."

"It's not a dangerous wound," she said, as the rosy hues of life came back to her face with interest. "I am not angry, Yusuf."

The face of the young sponge-gatherer glowed more at this assurance than it had done in the heat and excitement of the conflict. The next instant, however, the blood receded from his countenance, and he became deadly pale, as Isolotte could see in the moonlight.

"Are you injured?" she cried in alarm, as she took hold of him.

He recovered himself. "It's only a thought," he said, "a passing glimpse of the great gulf between us."

"Yusef!"

"You are not angry, lady?"

"No," answered Isolotte, with flushed cheeks and drooping eyelids. "What is the meaning of this emotion. What gulf is there between us?"

Ere another word could be said, a boat was heard coming from the direction of the mainland. It advanced swiftly, and was soon visible. It contained Ali, Thurbat, and the remainder of their followers, who had come with the latter to the Point. It also contained the man who had fled from before our hero's prowess. He had met his employer coming off to the island, and had explained the state of affairs to him.

Yusef saw all his peril at a glance.

"Quick!" he whispered, taking the maiden by the hand. "We may yet escape them! This way! To my boat!"

The sentence was succeeded by a cry of surprise

and apprehension. Even as Isolotte and her brave defender moved in the direction intimated, they saw that several men had come from the mysterious schooner in a boat, and were now disembarking on the off-shore end of the island, thus placing him between two fires.

"Allah! we're lost!" he whispered, instinctively feeling that the new-comers were enemies. "We're completely surrounded, yet you shall not be taken without a struggle!"

Isolotte, on seeing the number of the ruffians, sought, with a generous self-sacrifice, to prevent Yusuf from a struggle which she saw must prove unavailing, but she might as well have talked to a stone.

With the fierceness of an enraged lion, he caught her up in his arms, and bounded towards his boat, exclaiming:

"Make way here! I must pass!"

As quick as these movements had been made, Ali had already landed, at the head of his men, and he now bounded after our hero, commanding:

"Close in upon him, before and behind! I do not want you to fire—you might hurt the lady. Cut him down with your scimitars!"

The new-comers all sprang to the assault. "Heaven help us!" was all Isolotte could say.

The great scout of Yusuf rose to meet the emergency thrust upon him.

Surrounded—his retreat cut off—beset by a band of men acting under the stimulus of a prospective ransom, as he readily imagined, his position was one in which few men would have maintained their calmness and courage.

"Back, sir!" he exclaimed in a deep voice, as his scimitar flashed in the moonlight. "You cannot advance to this lady except over my dead body. Back!"

The princely bearing of the young sponge-gatherer, or his stern demeanour, or both combined, caused the assailants to pause in their attack. They were evidently debating how to get at him to the best advantage.

"Oh, Yusuf!" whispered Isolotte. "Simple in itself, the exclamation was one of those utterances that cannot be forgotten. It attested the admiration she bore him, the anxiety she felt for his safety, and, better than all, the warmer feelings which were filling her whole soul to overdoing."

The pause was ended—the assailants came on! The terrific combat was begun.

Isolotte held her breath at the flashing and clashing of the weapons of the combatants, and her terror and anguish were excessive; yet amid all the wild emotions of her soul, she experienced a thrill of proud joy. It was something to have gained the insight she now had of Yusuf's nature—something to possess such a defender—something to read his noble devotion in the light of this terrible struggle!

"Angels of darkness!" exclaimed Ali, as he saw how our hero stood up to the fight. "What sort of a man have we stumbled upon here? Down with him! All together!"

The maiden kept so close to her gallant defender that the assailants did not dare to use their pistols, and fearful was the havoc the heroic sponge-gatherer made among them. With swift and restless movements of the scimitar he had secured, he cut the head of one man, ran through a second, and nearly lopped off the right arm of a third from his body, but the numbers of his foes at length prevailed. Assailed on each side as well as in front, covered with numerous wounds, from which the blood flowed copiously, blinded by a cut over his right eye, he was struck senseless to the ground by a cowardly blow from a ruffian who had crept up behind him, and the dearly-bought victory of the assailants was won.

The girl was secured.

Yusef lay weltering in his blood on the sands.

CHAPTER VI.

The person who had come in charge of the men from the schooner was Ali's brother. He was a rough-looking fellow, and had been summoned from an ignoble obscurity to take part in the chamberlain's plans. He and Ali saluted each other over their prostrate foe, and Thurbat was introduced to his uncle.

After the trio had conversed a few moments, they turned their attention to business.

"The point is, Hemon," whispered Ali, "to obtain a ransom for this girl. To do this, her wealthy father must think that she has been seized by Arabian corsairs. That's the character we must personate."

Hemon bowed.

"We must accordingly carry the girl to the schooner," proceeded the chamberlain. "This is your part of the business. Collect your dead and prepare to go back to your vessel."

The order was promptly obeyed.

"Put the lady in the boat," added Ali, "and see that she keeps quiet."

The poor girl was dragged from the side of her unconscious defender, whom she had been endeavouring to restore to his senses, and thrust into the boat with the dead and wounded, and pushed off for the schooner.

"Let me say one word more, brother," said Ali. "I am going to enter into negotiations with the girl's father. This is my part of the business. I shall board the ship in his den—visit him boldly at his own house."

"There's danger in so doing," replied Hemon. "He may kill you in his wrath and sorrow."

"Well, the risk must be taken. You must deal with the girl as they deal with me. In case I do not return, you'll take care that I am fully avenged. Understand?"

Hemon again nodded, and took his departure for the schooner.

Ali and Thurbat, with their three surviving men, were left on the island.

"You hear what I said?" said the chamberlain to his son. "I'll go alone to Haschid's, in the boat belonging to our unknown warrior. You and the boys had better go back to the Point and await me there. It will not take me long to arrange this affair of the ransom."

"But do you intend to give the girl up?" asked Thurbat.

"No, I can get the ransom without. I shall keep her in our hands until you can make terms with her father. Our love-making and money-getting lie in the same channel."

Thurbat expressed his satisfaction at these views, and set out for the Point, attended by the three men.

Ali spurred the unconscious body of Yusuf with his foot, and hastened to the boat with which our hero had been gathering sponges during the afternoon.

Its load was soon thrown over-board, and the scheming chamberlain was on his way to the castle.

"Thus far, all goes gloriously," he thought. "I must retain the girl after obtaining the ransom."

Unused as he was to the management of a boat, he had quite an arduous row before him; but he did not care.

He worked away in silence, making satisfactory progress. His thoughts continued as busy as jubilant.

He at length saw lights flashing hurriedly along the shore, in the direction of Haschid's house.

"The absence of the fair one has been discovered," he muttered. "I will arrive in time to spare her friends a painful search!"

He held on his way, now moving quite rapidly, owing to his enlarged knowledge of rowing.

He was soon near enough to the shore to hear the confused voices of Haschid's servants, who were wildly searching for their young mistress.

The gratified schemer set up a great cry.

"Let them know from the start that she's gone seaward," he muttered. "I don't want them prowling on land—neither to the wadi nor elsewhere."

The boat continued its way seaward, and was soon near enough, in the sheen of the moonlight, to be visible from the castle.

Another series of cries from Ali attracted allies to him, and he was hailed by several voices at once, all desiring him to land and explain.

When it had become fully evident that he was coming ashore, there was a general move on the part of the servants towards the landing.

A moment later the boat reached the foot of the rock-stairs we have mentioned, and Ali sprang out amid a hushed and awed silence.

He was met by Haschid, whose countenance showed what he had suffered during the last half hour, and they saluted each other.

"I am Barbarigo the Corsair," then said Ali. "I believe I have the honour of addressing Abdel-Haschid."

"I am he," replied the old man. "I can't say that I am familiar with your name or title; but I am anxious to know what has brought you to my presence."

The bereaved old father suspected the merchant's mission only too well. The grim announcement of the arch-plotter had been suggestive to him.

"You shall soon hear," said Ali. "I am here on a little business transaction which concerns your daughter. She was seized this evening in your garden, and is now a captive aboard of my vessel."

The old merchant's mein indicated the emotion he experienced—a sudden and irresistible terror.

"My daughter?" he managed to articulate.

"Yes! The simple fact is," and he looked as quiet as if he were discussing some petty barter on sale, "I have not been very fortunate lately in my profession, and have been compelled by one cause and another to replenish my purse from yours by this process."

A burning flash of wrath came over Haschid's face

and he raised his hand towards his servants, who were pressing down the rock-stairs and ranging themselves around. Ali caught his extended arm, with a cat-like agility, and half drew a pistol from his pocket.

"Let me suggest a little reflection and calmness," he said, with a countenance as implacable as death itself. "I can shoot you and myself before your servants can seize me, and what then? Why, your daughter would experience a fate to which in comparison our deaths would be simple blessings."

Haschid felt the fiendishness of the speaker, and sank back upon one of the stone steps leading to the castle.

"Villain! What have you done with her?" he demanded.

"As I observed, she is aboard of my vessel."

"And your terms?"

"Twenty thousand pounds, to be paid to me this night."

A long pause succeeded. Ali seated himself on the stone-steps, and quietly looked seaward.

"Very well, sir," finally said Haschid; "bring my daughter here, and I will pay you the ransom you demand."

The self-styled corsair crossed his legs and smiled, in his peculiar, wicked manner, and the two men again looked at each other several moments in silence. Ali was in no wise discomposed by this scrutiny, but, on the contrary, rather pleased by the emotion the troubled glances of Haschid displayed. He rejoiced in the knowledge that the money would be forthcoming.

"What security have I," he demanded, in his hard and cold voice, "that you will not kill me on the spot, or arrest me for punishment, the instant the girl is again in your hands?"

"Security? You have my word of honour. Bring my daughter to this spot, and I pledge my most sacred word to pay you the twenty thousand pounds you demand, and will assure you an unmolested return to your vessel."

The old man might have added that he had sworn in his own soul to spend five or ten times the amount of the ransom, if necessary, to bring the corsair to condign punishment, at the expiration of the obligation he had taken.

Ali shook his head.

"I know that I couldn't be trusted so far as you ask me to trust you," he said. "Without expressing any doubts of your word I wish to say that I should not feel safe in bringing the girl here. You'll excuse the fact, I'm sure, in view of the utter extinction of all confidence which results from my profession. Sorry to appear hard in my terms, but this is no time to trifle."

He looked as grim as a hungry tiger.

"Well, how do you propose to return my child and receive the ransom?" asked Haschid, after a pause.

"In the simplest manner possible. An hour hence, I will appear on a certain island, attended by one man and the girl, and you can meet me there, attended by one man and the ransom. We'll then exchange our treasures, and you and yours can go your way, while I and mine proceed ours. What can be better?"

The off-handed manner in which Ali uttered this proposition did not blind Haschid by its nature. He saw that the corsair could place men in waiting at the rendezvous, and retain the money, the girl, and even himself.

He remarked as much to the visitor.

"Can't help that," was the response. "You take your chances."

A cold sweat broke out on Haschid's brow. He was tempted to seize the bold villain before him, and make Islette's restoration a question of his life or death; but the awful peril to which she was exposed caused him to dismiss the thought. He reflected a few moments, and then said:

"I accept your terms, as hard as they are. When and where shall we meet you?"

"I'll send a man to guide you to the rendezvous, in about an hour."

"Very well. I will not fail you."

Ali soon took his departure, in a state of the most lively rejoicing. Haschid gazed after him, with a meaning light in his clear eyes.

"Undoubtedly, the villain intends to trick me," he soliloquized. "He intends to keep my poor Islette, and secure the ransom. But let him beware! If he brings his crew to the rendezvous, I'll have twenty or thirty of my men looking out for his vessel at the same moment."

He instantly armed twenty of his servants, provided them with a good night-glass, and sent them seaward in boats, with orders to creep up near the corsair vessel, and ready to seize her at any signs of a combat on any of the islands.

"We shall have a rendezvous on one of them, in

the course of an hour," he said, by way of final instruction. "If the rascal brings his crew with him, you'll learn the fact from our pistols, and must precipitate yourselves on the schooner and seize her."

This was the thought which had caused Haschid to accept the corsair's one-sided proposition. As a precaution against treachery, it seemed to have solidity and practicability; but the old man grew nervous over it after his boats had gone, and he suddenly experienced a shock of terror and agony, as he reflected that the probable result of such a checkmate would be the instant death of his daughter.

His resources seemed inadequate to the emergency. He felt that he was at sea, without charts or compass.

All was dark and threatening before him.

(To be continued.)

OLD CASSAM'S SLIPPERS.

AN ARABIAN TALE.

THERE formerly lived at Bagdad, an old shop-keeper, Abou Cassam by name, much celebrated for his avarice. Though he was exceedingly rich, his clothes were composed of shreds and patches; his turban, of the coarsest linen, was so filthy, dirty, and greasy, that its original colour could no longer be distinguished; but of all his wardrobe (the whole of which he carried on him) his slippers merited the particular attention of the curious. The soles were ornamented with immense hobnails, and the uppers were apparently nothing but patches. During the ten years that they had been slippers, the most skillful cobblers of the country had exhausted all the ingenuity of their art in collecting and drawing together the ruins. They had even become so weighty as to be a proverb; and when his townsmen wished to speak of anything as peculiarly burlesome, the slippers of Cassam were always the objects of comparison.

One day as the merchant was walking in the grand bazaar of the city, some one offered to sell him a considerable quantity of crystal; he quickly concluded the bargain, as it was a very advantageous one.

Having learned some days after that a ruined perfumer, had been compelled, as a last resource, to sell a quantity of the finest rose-water, the merchant profited by the misfortune of this poor man, and purchased the rose-water at less than half its value.

This good fortune put him in a good humour; in place of giving a great feast, as was the custom of the Eastern merchants when they made a good bargain, he found it more expedient to venture the expense of going to the bath, where he had not been for a long time.

As he was taking off his garments, one of his friends—or at least a person whom he took to be such (for misers very rarely have friends)—told him that his slippers made him the laughing-stock of the whole city, and that he ought to purchase others.

"I have been thinking of that for a long time," replied Cassam; "but these are not so much worn out that I cannot wear them some time yet."

During this conversation he had entered the bathroom. Whilst he was bathing, the Cadi of Bagdad came in also. Cassam having finished before the judge, passed into the outer room; he dressed, but sought in vain for his slippers; but in the place of them, he found a beautiful new pair.

Our miser persuaded himself—because he wished it—that he who had spoken so well had left them as a present, and put them on, and left the bath in very good spirits, because he had been saved the mortification of purchasing a pair of slippers.

When the cadi had finished bathing, his slaves hunted everywhere for his slippers—but they found none but a vile pair of leather ones, which were discovered to be those of Cassam.

The eunuchs pursued the supposed cheat, and brought him back accused of theft; the cadi, after having again changed slippers, sent him to prison.

Money was necessary to get out of the claws of justice; and as Cassam was reputed to be at least as rich as he was avaricious, they did not let him escape without paying a pretty large sum.

On his return home, the afflicted Cassam, in spite, threw his slippers into the Tigris, which flowed under his windows.

A few days after, some fishermen, drawing a net more heavy than usual, found in it the slippers of Cassam. The nails with which they were covered had broken the meshes of the net.

The fishermen, angry both at Cassam and the slippers, took it into their heads to throw them into his house, through the windows which he had left open.

The slippers, being thrown with some force, struck the vials which were in the window, and knocked them down; the bottles were broken, and all the fine rose-water was lost. Imagine to yourself, gentle reader, if you can, the grief of Cassam at these accumulated disasters.

"Cursed slippers!" cried he, tearing his beard, "you have caused me great losses!"

He sighed, and taking a shovel, made a hole in his garden to bury his ruined, though still beloved, shoes.

One of his neighbours, who, for a long time, had a spite against him, saw him replacing the earth. He immediately ran to tell the governor that Cassam had dug up a treasure in his garden; he only wished to excite the cupidity of the commander.

It was useless for our miser to say that he had not found a treasure, and that he had only buried his old shoes; the governor had calculated on getting the money, and poor Cassam was not set at liberty until he had paid another large sum.

Our man was desperate, and wishing his slippers destroyed with all his heart, went to throw them into the aqueduct some distance from the city. He believed, for once, that he would hear nothing more of his slippers; but the evil one, who was not yet tired of playing tricks, justly directed the slippers to the small opening of the aqueduct, and they stopped the flow of water.

The overseers of the fountain hastened to repair the damage. They found and carried to the governor the old shoes of Cassam, declaring that they had done all the mischief.

The unfortunate master of the slippers was sent to prison and condemned to pay a fine far heavier than the two first ones.

The governor who had punished the crime, pretending to be very liberal, returned the precious slippers to the owner.

Cassam, in order to prevent any further evils that they might cause, determined to burn them; and as they were perfectly soaked with water, he placed them in the sun on the terrace of his house.

But fortune had not yet exhausted all her arrows against him, and the last which she had reserved for him was more cruel than all the rest. A dog, belonging to one of the neighbours, perceived the slippers, and jumped from the terrace of his master to that of our miser; he took one of the slippers in his mouth, and while playing with it, let it fall into the street.

This unlucky old shoe fell directly on the head of a lady who was passing at the moment. The terror and the violence of the blow occasioned a long and dangerous illness.

The husband complained to the cadi, and Cassam was condemned to pay a fine proportionate to the magnitude of the injury of which he was the cause.

He returned home, and taking his two slippers in his hands, returned to the cadi.

"My lord," said he to the cadi, with so dolorous a visage that the judge could not restrain his laughter, "here are the fatal instruments of all my troubles. These cursed slippers have at length reduced me to poverty; condescend to have them arrested, in order that the misfortunes which they will still undoubtedly occasion may not be imputed to me."

The cadi could not refuse his request; and Cassam learned, to his cost, the great danger of not frequently changing his slippers.

C. C.

SUCH is the enormous bulk of the atmosphere, that even if there were no restorative or renovating agencies in operation, no less a period than 800,000 years must elapse before the animals living on the surface of the earth could consume the whole of its oxygen.

THE JOCKEY CLUB FLOWER GIRL.—Isabella, the *bouquetière* of the French Jockey Club, who was lately attacked by two men in the streets of Paris and valiantly drove them off, must now be a person of some means, for she receives a great many valuable gifts, and the monopoly of the flower trade on the race-courses should be very profitable. It is the custom for the winner of the Derby to present her with a dress of his own turf colours. That which she received this year from M. Charles Lafitte, who figures on the correct card as Major Fridolin, was a wonder in its way, and was due to the famous milliner Worth. The colours were light blue and white, the buttons were jockey caps of silver, the waist buckle was a silver saddle, and horseshoes, bits, curb-chains and stirrups hung from every possible and impossible part of the dress. Isabella has a great reputation and good looks, but can hardly be considered as the type of the ideal flower girl, being less remarkable for beauty than for health and strength, of which latter qualities her recent exploit has shown the value.

THE FEAST OF CHERRIES.—There is a feast celebrated at Naumburg, called the "Feast of Cherries," in which troops of children parade the streets with green boughs, ornamented with cherries, to commemorate a triumph obtained in the following manner. In 1432 the Hussites threatened the city of Naumburg with immediate destruction, when one of the citizens, named Wolf, proposed that all the children

in the city, from seven to fourteen years of age, should be clad in mourning, and sent as supplicants to the enemy. Procopius Nasus, chief of the Hussites, was so touched with this spectacle, that he received the young supplicants, regaled them with fruit, and promised them to spare the city. The children returned crowned with leaves, holding cherries, and crying: "Victory!"—*Phillips's Fruits of Great Britain.*

TEMPTATION.

By J. F. SMITH.

Author of "The Will and the Way," "Woman and her Master," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Why should we weep when children die?
They escape the hand of thought and sin;
Stretched in their innocence they lie,
Fair as the first-pluck'd flowers of spring.

Birthday Ode.

THERE is nothing in humanity more engaging than childhood. Its graces and affections, like the tendrils of the young vine, twine themselves so closely round the hearts of those who are its support and guide, that it becomes almost impossible to separate them.

Felix Garrachi, the only child of the singer, had inherited the characteristics of both his parents. He was gifted, beautiful, capricious, passionate, and generous—the pet of his father—the idol of his mother—who loved him—as mothers only love—with that deep devotion which sees into the future. The defects—the very genius of her boy alarmed her. On Faunty's first introduction to the house, the spoiled urchin regarded her with jealousy and dislike. He could not endure the thought of another sharing the caresses of his parents.

At the end of a week he tolerated her, and before a month had elapsed could not endure her a moment from his presence; for no sooner had he discovered, with the intuitive perception of his years, that the little stranger was no rival in the affections of madame, but merely an object of her benevolence, than he made her his companion, his playmate, his friend.

It was beautiful to watch the two children—so different, yet each equally lovely; the boy, his hair and eyes dark, like most of the infants of the sunny south—impetuous, wayward, yet generous—at one moment quarrelling with his playmate, because she could—or, as he poutingly declared, would—not understand him—the next, throwing his little arms around her, and passionately kissing away the tears his fury had drawn forth; the girl fair—oh, how dazzling fair!—her features radiant with the holy innocence of childhood—her hair floating in masses of natural curls over her neck and shoulders.

As they sometimes stood with their arms entangling each other, watching some object from the window, or gazing on the toys and flowers which, with maternal fondness, madame frequently surprised them, they reminded her of the twin angels of night and morning.

In the midst of the elegance and luxury which surrounded her, Faunty did not forget her old friends at St. Martin's Court. Whenever Sally, the young painter, the aged actress, or any of the inmates of her former home came to visit her, Felix, toys, amusement, all were abandoned.

She sprang into their arms with the pure, eager love of childhood. She was too young to know ingratitude—or, as Madame Montrean would have expressed it, to feel the independence of the heart.

It was only by making him sketches and yielding to all his humours, that Barry succeeded in reconciling the boy to his visits.

How frequently has the climate of England proved fatal to the children of the south—especially when transplanted at too early an age to her humid soil? Despite the care, the tender solicitude with which Madame Garrachi watched over her child, a slight hectic cough settled on his chest—the forerunner of that fatal disease, consumption, which has desolated so many a once happy home by robbing it of its most graceful ornaments.

The mother became alarmed. The signor, who had by this time fallen completely into the toils of the artful Mademoiselle Cherini, only "pooh-poohed," and laughed at her fears. The first fine weather, a little sun and fresh air, he declared, would set all to rights. She, listening to his hopes, rather than her convictions, believed him.

The sun came at last—as he generally comes in England, like a lazy laggard, half-ashamed to show his face; the air, too, blew freshly—but the cough of little Felix increased. Madame insisted on sending for a physician; her husband went for one, but took care to inform him on the way of what he termed his wife's unfounded apprehensions.

The man of science received both his cue and his fee before making his visit.

"See how thin he is!" objected the anxious mother, her fears but half allayed by the assurance that there were no symptoms of consumption.

"His age, madame?"

"Eight years, sir."

The physician declared that he was merely outgrowing his strength.

"I told you so!" exclaimed the signor, in a tone of satisfaction—for he well knew that no persuasion or motives of interest would have induced her to remain another day in England, had she really been convinced that the life of her boy was in danger; "you are too anxious!"

His wife looked at him reproachfully, as if to ask whether it were possible for the heart of a mother to feel too anxious where the life of her only child was at stake.

Independent of the heartless father's desire not to separate himself from the syren who had enthralled him, Signor Garrachi had another, and, if possible, a yet meaner motive: the opera season was but half over, and madame's engagement was a most lucrative one.

"Still," said the physician, hesitatingly—for the man had some conscience—"we cannot be too careful: the curse of our English climate undoubtedly is consumption. Prevention is better than cure: what I recommend is change of air."

"Italy!" exclaimed the singer.

Her husband looked dreadfully annoyed.

"Humph—no! too warm! climate too exciting!"

replied the medical man; "might produce the effect to which at present there are only slight—very slight—predisposing causes. What I should recommend would be a few miles from London—Surrey, for instance. Ha!" he added, as if suddenly recollecting something, "I have hit on the very place. A friend of mine, who has retired from practice, has a delightful retreat near Richmond. I know that he has occasionally accommodated invalids. He is skilful, kind, and— But perhaps madame would consider the distance too far, or the terms—"

"Are of no importance, compared with the health of my boy!" interrupted Madame Garrachi, pressing Felix—who began to consider the visit of too man in black a bore—to her bosom. "When can I see him?"

The physician offered very considerably to drive over himself; in fact, the house was his own, and the retired medical man whom he had so highly recommended, was no other than his father-in-law, who conducted it for him.

It was not the first instance we have seen of science playing into the hands of cupidity.

In three days the boy was taken to Richmond; at the end of a month the disease had made such rapid advances that it was pronounced dangerous to remove him.

Then it was that Felix reaped the reward of his kindness to Faunty. His little playfellow waited upon him with the most untiring assiduity; sat entire days by his bedside, endeavouring to amuse him—to soothe his fretful humours and impatience.

Never was the devotion of one human being to another more touching and complete. Three nights a-week, despite the grief which consumed her, Madame Garrachi continued to delight the audience of the King's Theatre; every other moment was passed with her dying boy. Little did the Duke of This and my Lord That, as they wondered at the exquisite pathos of her strains, imagine that they were wrung from the agony of her maternal heart—that her very soul was incorporated with them. Never had she been so popular or so wretched.

Rumours of the *union* between her worthless husband and unprincipled rival had reached her, but they scarcely augmented her sorrow: the first overwhelming grief rendered her comparatively insensible to the pain of the second; probably, too, her soul was armed by the shield of scorn.

Perhaps she ceased to consider him as the lover of her youth—the husband of her choice—the being to whom she had confided the happiness of her life, and the rich treasure of her love: for behind the spacious mask, she saw the mercenary, heartless man who had speculated upon her genius—her rising fame—and indulged in an easy, luxurious existence from the exercise of her talents.

If it were so, it was fortunate for herself—for let the heart once despise the being to which it has clung through good and ill—feel that the idol it has worshipped is of clay, instead of gold—and the cure is half complete. There may still be regrets, tears, and agonies—yet they are but the throes of an expiring passion—the straining of the chain before it breaks—the struggles of the snake as we uncoil its deceitful folds from around the heart, to let it beat more freely.

Signor Alberto frequently wondered, as he gazed on the thoughtful features of his wife, whether the rumours of his infidelity had reached her—for not one word of reproach or expostulation had ever passed

her lips. She endured her misery in silence—her were the wrongs

Too proud for words—too deep for tears—
The Niobe of modern years.

In his vanity he imagined that she loved him still, and chose to ignore the truth, for fear of losing him entirely.

This idea, which none but a mind void of delicacy and honour could have entertained, added to his fatuity and confidence.

Mademoiselle Cherini felt that she had destroyed the happiness of her rival, and yet her triumph was but half complete—the genius of the woman she hated remained unsubdued. It required the loss of a purer love than the Italian's to crush the energies of his gifted wife.

If at times her voice flagged, or she appeared absorbed and regardless of the scene, it was only necessary for Madame Garrachi to hear her enemy speak—to catch her insolent smile—and in an instant she was herself again—would pour forth a gush of melody modulated by such exquisite science, that even her husband would pause to listen to her, and mentally ask himself what were the attractions which diverted his affections from a creature so gifted—so profitable.

(To be continued.)

EVA AHSLLEY.

CHAPTER LIV.

LEON THE INEXORABLE.

LEON AHSLLEY assumed his place in the society of his native country without question or audible comment.

Those who remembered the circumstances which had occurred so many years before, were impressed with the belief that a fair duel had ended fatally for one party; and, after so great a lapse of time, it would be useless and unfriendly to take any legal steps against the survivor.

The social prestige of his family sustained him, and in a short time the most prominent people within visiting distance called at Arden Place to make the acquaintance of the family, and congratulate Mr. Ahslley on his return to his native land.

As the heiress of so magnificent an inheritance, Evelyn attracted much attention; but the visitors observed the coldness with which her father listened to praises of her, and the subdued petulance with which he treated her before strangers.

The supposition was that he hated her because he was in a measure dependant on her, and much sympathy was felt and expressed for her unhappy position in the house every one believed to be her own.

Day after day Bessie was sent for from Arden Place, and sometimes, at the imperious command of Ahslley, detained for a week at a time; yet Mrs. Ahslley was powerless to set forth her higher claim to the society of her daughter.

Ahslley seemed fascinated, enthralled by Bessie's mere presence, and the lovers began to hope everything from the influence she seemed to be acquiring over him.

With gentle despotism she refused to listen to him when he spoke of her future union with Wentworth, and she insisted that he should be left free to know and appreciate her newly-found father before she was called on to accept any one as her husband.

Such sweet flattery as this lulled the evil spirit with which she had to deal with temporary rest, and Ahslley almost ceased to torment poor Evelyn with his incessant watchfulness.

But she was fully conscious that a Cerberus not less keenly interested in keeping her out of Wentworth's reach never relaxed her vigilance. Augusta assumed the office of spy on her stepdaughter, and assiduously kept herself informed of every movement she made; but she performed her office quietly, and the poor girl was thankful for the respite from the harsh language she was accustomed to receive from her father, though she knew she was under strict espionage every hour of her life.

In spite of the diversion made in her favour by Bessie, she dared not attempt to write to Frank, for she knew that her portfolio was daily examined, and when she had once supposed herself free from surveillance, and availed herself of the opportunity to dash off a line to Frank, the head of her stepmother was suddenly thrust over her shoulder, and her voice asked:

"To whom are you writing, love? You can have no correspondents in this country, and your father will be displeased if you attempt to communicate with a certain person. Don't annoy him, Evelyn, for his health is still in a very precarious state, and the result may be fatal if he be thrown into one of his violent paroxysms of passion."

From that day Evelyn forbore to make an effort to address the lover she was never permitted to see except in her father's presence; for Frank's home was at Ashurst, and the haughty treatment he received from his uncle caused him to present himself at his house as seldom as possible.

Bessie was the only channel of communication between the lovers, and she sustained the spirits of both by carrying constant messages between them, even while Mr. Ashley supposed she was gradually making up her mind to accept the destiny which had been prepared for her.

No mention of another lover was made, for Bessie had exacted from Mrs. Ashley a promise that she would keep her secret till Delancey appeared on the scene to plead his own cause.

Her mother would never have consented to such an arrangement if she had not seen in the marine intelligence an account of severe gales, in one of which it was stated that the ship, Osprey, commanded by Captain Martin, had been so severely injured, that on her arrival in Liverpool it was found necessary to place her in dock for repairs.

So Mrs. Ashley had more time to breathe, and Bessie gained her point. Mr. Ashley remained in blissful ignorance that the imperious charmer who had taken his heart by storm was actually betrothed to one she loved with all the passionate fervour of her nature.

When Bessie was at Arden Place she relieved Evelyn, in a great measure, of her onerous duties. She read aloud to Mr. Ashley in her turn, and was always ready to sing to him, accompanying herself on the guitar, the only instrument on which she could perform.

Her voice was a delicious soprano, and she played skilfully enough to enchant all who listened to her though she made no pretensions to much musical knowledge. Bessie had been entirely educated by Mrs. Ashley, and the squire had been so well satisfied with her attainments that he had not considered it necessary to send her to a finishing school.

The days rolled onwards and even Bessie's heart quaked a little when the end of the stipulated two months drew near without any apparent change in the lovers' favour.

She clearly saw that the time approached in which she must strike a decisive blow, and ascertain definitely what the fate of Wentworth and Evelyn was to be, before she could ask from the latter the fulfilment of her pledge.

Frank had already chafed and murmured at the delay, declaring it to be useless, but Bessie represented to him that just now it would be impossible for Evelyn to escape from the espionage in which she was held, and unless some skilful diversion were made in her favour, she did not know how an elopement could be managed.

To this he testily replied:

"You can manage that as you do everything else, Bessie; what you twist us all around your fingers just as you please."

She faintly smiled, and said:

"Don't be unjust to me, Frank. If you only knew how tired I am of playing the part that is forced on me, you would not speak as you do. I sometimes think I am a treacherous and untruthful child, to wheedle my father as I daily do, to gain some end of my own; but somehow I have never felt as if I owed him the obedience of a daughter; fond as he is of me, I have never experienced for him any emotion stronger than compassion. He is so violent, that I tremble as the time approaches to unveil my heart before him, and show him that he has been resting on treacherous hope in believing that I would hold you to your troth with me."

Wentworth saw that she was wounded by his late words and he penitently said:

"Forgive me, Bessie; but I am so unhappy—so uncertain of what a day may bring forth, that I am kept in a continued state of wretched expectation. If I could see Evelyn alone—could receive the assurance that the promise will be kept if we can succeed in releasing her from the captivity in which she is held, I could bear this suspense better; but she is so timid, so fearful of her father's malediction, that I have little faith in the fulfilment of her pledge. She will be sure to shrink back at the last moment."

"I have done all that I can to reassure you at that point, Frank. I cannot answer for Evelyn's courage at the last; but I know that she loves you with all her heart, and you must content yourself with that certainty till the time arrives to test her fortitude in violating her father's commands."

"Well, she has not much longer to debate the question," he gloomily replied, "for in another week the time agreed on expires, and two weeks from to-day the wedding at The Oaks takes place. Mr. Delancey will then appear on the scene, and formally make known his pretensions to your hand. Oh, Bessie, what an explosion there will be!"

"The first explosion caused by your elopement

with Evelyn will blow us up so effectually, that what there is left will be prepared for anything," she replied, with a sparkle of her old humour. "When Ernest comes to pick me out of the ruins, I think my father will be too much subdued to say no to his proposal."

Frank shook his head dubiously, but he was somewhat comforted, and he sent innumerable messages to Evelyn when she returned to Arden Place.

Mrs. Ashley during all these weeks was in a state of wretched indecision.

She often accompanied her daughter on her visits to her stepson, and frequently tendered her services as reader, for he had weak eyes and never read a line himself.

To her extreme annoyance, she found that the influence she hoped to gain over the irritable sensualist was entirely superseded by that of Bessie.

In her presence he scarcely seemed to notice any one else, and although he was studiously polite to Mrs. Ashley, he manifested no pleasure in her society; in fact, it seemed rather a restraint upon him.

The youth and freshness of Bessie possessed an inexpressible charm to the worn-out man of pleasure, and as she sat on a low ottoman reading to him, he would amuse himself for hours playing with a tress of her hair, unwinding it from the shell-like ear, and twisting its golden length around his fingers.

He declared that Bessie's hair, which has given name to one of the constellations, was never more beautiful than hers, and lavished on her the flatteries which, in his youth, had made him irresistible to most women.

If Bessie did not love him she was not insensible to the homage he offered her charms, and she received it in such a manner as to fill her mother with pain.

Mrs. Ashley often felt as if it would be impossible to keep her disgraceful secret much longer. Her child must be all her own, and not be called on to render filial attentions to a man who had no claims on her, and especially to such a man as she knew Leon Ashley to be.

Many times she felt tempted to draw Bessie forcibly from his side, proclaim aloud the sin of which she had been guilty, and bid him find the long lost daughter of Eva Weston, and restore her to her rightful position.

But the dread of scorn from the world, the fearful rage of this human tiger, should her evil deed be disclosed to him, deterred her, and heart-sick, she turned away with the feeling that her sin had found her out, and its results would yet bring her to the dust with shame and abasement.

Bessie saw that she was depressed and annoyed, and by attention and tenderness when they were together, she endeavoured to raise her falling spirits. Poor child! at this time she had both hands and heart full herself without attempting to give comfort to another; and her time was so fully occupied by Mr. Ashley's exactions, that she could scarcely command an hour to reply to her lover's letters, which came to her regularly under cover to Kate Welby.

In her turn she sent them over by Wentworth, who, at this uncomfortable time, was almost a daily visitor at The Oaks.

When Delancey first asked Bessie to be his wife she had fully explained to him the peculiar position in which she was placed, and he understood why some diplomacy was necessary before he could make known his pretensions to her hand with any prospect of success.

In two more weeks the brilliant wedding of Miss Welby was to be celebrated; the invitations had been sent far and wide to the friends of both families, and Bessie had promised to lay aside her mourning for that evening, and act as bridesmaid to her friend.

She had succeeded in obtaining from Mr. Ashley a promise that Evelyn should also be present on that occasion, and with much trepidation, courageous as she was, she decided that she must approach the dreaded subject of her own position towards Frank, and ascertain if Mr. Ashley could be induced, on any reasonable terms, to sanction the union of the lovers.

On the afternoon of the day on which she held the foregoing conversation with Wentworth, she sat beside him with the guitar on which she had been playing, thrown on the floor near her.

He seemed in an unusually good humour, and laughed and jested with her in the most agreeable manner.

Augusta listened to the playful badinage with feelings that were far from agreeable, and she at length said:

"If you were not Leon's daughter, I should be desperately jealous of you, Bessie. You have completely rivalled me, and you are the only creature who seems free from constant reproach in his presence."

Her husband turned a frowning brow towards her, and angrily said:

"Madam, I wonder that you should linger near me.

I can dispense with your presence now, as the only one who cares to understand me is near to minister to my wants. Evelyn has been absent from the room some time, and you had better look after her at once."

With a crestfallen air Augusta left the room, and Bessie said:

"Oh, papa, how can you treat Mrs. Ashley so cavalierly? She loves you, and would be glad to be everything to you if you would only permit her."

He curled his lip and indifferently replied:

"She does not amuse me, and that is of more consequence to me now than being loved. I was infatuated about that woman once, but after the first bloom of her beauty passed away, there was nothing left to care about. Poor Augusta only bore me now. If she only possessed a tithe of your brightness, of your wit and fun, I should still have some pleasure in her ministrations, but she is dull. Do you know, Bessie, I do not know what I should do without you."

"If I am so necessary to you, how will you consent to give me up to Frank? You insist that I shall hold him to his troth, yet you would be unwilling to see me go with him."

He impatiently replied:

"Frank is a nuisance to me. He is not worthy of you, for the simpleton actually prefers that little nobody Evelyn to you, my bright Peri. I almost wish that my father had not made such a will. It is too bad that you must eventually accept him; but such a gem as you are, Bessie, must have a magnificent setting, and I shall have nothing to give you."

"Then let Frank repudiate the bond himself and give the estate up to me. He is perfectly willing to do this, and accept Evelyn's hand and fortune in lieu of those he relinquishes. I, on my part, pledge myself to settle on you the half of the income which Frank gives up, and —"

She had thus far spoken so eagerly that Ashley could not interrupt her, but he now burst forth with the first imprecations he had ever used in her presence. After exhausting the first violence of his wrath in a volley of curses, he savagely went on:

"So you, who I believed true to me, are in league with Frank and Evelyn. You ask me to let the impression go abroad that you have been refused, jilted. Don't tangle me, Bessie, for I begin to find it pleasant to have something to love and forbear with. Hear my ultimatum—Evelyn shall never marry Frank Wentworth, nor any other man. She is too delicate to live many years, and she probably inherits the taint of insanity which is in the Arden blood. Is not that a sufficient reason for keeping her always under my own eye? I know that she cherishes a sentimental attachment for my nephew, and I do not regret it, for when you and he find that you must marry each other, Evelyn will gradually make up her mind that her destiny is that of single blessedness. It is the only safe one for her, as you will see if you reflect upon the antecedents of her mother's family."

Bessie summoned courage to remonstrate:

"Dear papa, believe me, Evelyn is in no more danger of losing her reason than I am, that is, unless you thwart her passion for Frank. In that case, the evil you dread might be brought on by the sufferings of her mind. They love each other too well for me to be willing to step between them, and I entreat that you will listen to my prayer in their behalf without manifesting such violent anger."

"Bessie Ashley," he said, with stern emphasis, "from no other person would I listen to such words at all, and you abuse the influence you have gained over me, when you dare to bring forward a petition I have sworn not to grant. It is my unalterable determination that your union with Frank shall take place at some future day. We need be in no hurry about the time; you are young enough to wait, and as you are both silly enough to think love of more value than worldly prosperity, I will give you time to come to your sober senses."

"Oh, papa," she passionately cried, "after what has passed between Frank and Evelyn, I can never marry him. It would be shameful for me to do such a thing; it would break my sister's heart, and make Frank hate me."

"What right had your sister to attempt to rival you. She knew the compact that binds you and Frank to choose each other; knew that it would be ruin to one or both to repudiate it. Let her silly heart break; and as to my nephew, there is little fear that he will not, in time, adore such a woman as you are. I have no doubt on that score."

"Then your will is immutable?" she asked, with a strange glitter in her eyes.

"Immutable as fate itself. I shall take good care that Evelyn has no chance to play me false; a constant watch shall be kept over her. I will command Augusta not to lose sight of her while Frank remains

in the neighbourhood. Why don't he go on his travels? He has seen nothing of his own country, and there is as much work seeing on this side of the water as on the other."

"The winter season is not the usual time selected for a tour of pleasure," replied Bessie, with a peculiar smile. "But I believe that Frank intends to set out on his travels very soon. But he does not wish to go alone, and perhaps he may ask you for a companion."

"He need not ask for you yet awhile, and as to Evelyn, she is quite out of the question. Come, sing to me again; my nerves are all unstrung from discussing this unwelcome topic."

Bessie took up her guitar, struck the chords in a discordant manner, and rising, said:

"I beg you will excuse me, papa, for I am too much disturbed in mind to sing at present. Besides, I promised Minny to return to Ashurst before night, and I must set out at once to reach there before dark."

"Confound Minny! I believe she is jealous of your stay near me. I have seen her look at us when we are together in a way I did not half like. She thinks, because she has had charge of you from your infancy, that her claims on you are superior to mine."

"Her claims are indeed great, sir, for she has been more than a mother to me. I owe to her all that I am. She educated me, formed my principles, and from her I must have caught the charm of manner you so often compliment."

"You are a zealous advocate, Miss Ashley, but I wish you would not speak of my stepmother as if she were entitled to more of your affection than you bestow on me. Since you must go, give me a kiss, and be sure to come back in the morning."

"I shall be certain to do that," she significantly replied, and stooping over, she lightly touched her lips to his forehead.

CHAPTER LV.

THE EAVESDROPPER.

FLYING into the apartment in which Evelyn sat with her fancy work, guarded by her stepmother, Bessie said:

"Papa wishes you to go to him, I believe, Mrs. Ashley. I am compelled to go back to Ashurst tonight, so I cannot remain any longer with him."

With a dark look, Augusta arose at once, and said, with an accent of pique:

"I suppose he can tolerate me when you are not within reach. Bessie Ashley, the time will come to you, as it has to myself, when that icy hearted man will cast you off as unfeelingly as he does me. I love him—you know that I do—yet yet you come between him and me every day, every hour."

Bessie's forbearance was almost worn out, and she felt as if she must burst into tears, but she controlled herself, and quietly said:

"Do not blame me, mamma, for what I cannot help. I would willingly give place to you if I were permitted to do so."

"Don't tell me that—I know better," was the passionate response. "Can I not see for myself that your head is as much turned by his flatteries as my own once was—alas! so much the worse for me! But if you were fifty times his daughter, I would not stand!"

What further she might have said was cut short by a violent ring from the bell. Ashley usually kept beside him, and Augusta hurried away to obey the summons so peremptorily given.

Bessie looked after her with an expression of painful surprise, but she had no sooner disappeared than she turned to Evelyn, who was anxiously regarding her face, and said:

"We have not a moment to lose, Evelyn, for someone will be sent hither to overhear what I have to say to you."

She paused, as if uncertain how to go on, and Evelyn grew white as she whispered:

"What is it, Bessie? Something painful, I can very well see."

"Only this: That there is no hope save in your own energy and Frank's devotion. He insists that I shall eventually become the wife of Frank, and openly declares his determination to prevent you from marrying at all. Oh, Evelyn, if you fall Frank now, in his desperation, I am afraid he will be capable of giving you up, and consenting to fulfil the contract out of spite."

"How can you say such a thing of so noble a man as Frank?" replied Evelyn, almost angrily. "I will not fail him. I am made so wretched here, that any change must be for the better. I place my fate in his hands and yours, and bid you act for me. What you think right I will do."

"Now I know you for my true sister," exclaimed Bessie, delightedly, "and I promise you that you shall be rescued. I am going home to consult with

Frank to-night. He shall write out our plans in detail, and I will find means to give you the letter without any one being aware of it."

"Yes—I understand; but mamma is coming back; I hear her stealthy step approaching," whispered Evelyn, in great agitation, and the next moment Augusta opened the door, and commanded Evelyn to go to her father immediately.

Without daring to glance toward Bessie, she gathered up her work and left the room, accompanied by her stepmother.

"Poor slave!" sighed the young girl. "She never knows what it is to draw a free breath. She lives in constant dread of that fearful man it is our misfortune to claim for our father. I am unstrung, I suppose, for I have no soft feeling for him which can excuse his conduct towards poor Evelyn."

She sighed as she donned her riding-skirt and hat, for the afternoon was so mild that she had rode over on horseback.

But when she found herself mounted on her high-mettled steed, flying over the ground that lay between Arden Place and Ashurst, her spirits revived, and she felt her courage rising to meet and conquer the difficulties that arose before her thick and fast.

Twilight was gathering when she dismounted at the door of Ashurst, and mild as the weather was, she felt chilled through with her rapid ride through the sunless woods.

She found a bright fire burning, and too ready to be served as soon as she made her appearance. The affectionate welcome she received both from Mrs. Ashley and Wentworth brought back brightness to her brow and smiles to her lips; for to be loved and petted made the happiness of Bessie's life.

Her gay spirits throughout the evening almost convinced Frank that nothing had occurred during her absence to depress her, but as they were separating for the night she found an opportunity to whisper to him, as she believed, unnoticed by Mrs. Ashley:

"Come back here in an hour, Frank. I have something important to communicate to you."

Mrs. Ashley's ears were exceedingly keen, and more acute than Wentworth's, she had seen that in spite of Bessie's gaiety, something was lying heavy at her heart. She caught the drift of the low-breathed words, careful as Bessie believed she had been to evade her notice, and she vainly asked herself what her daughter could possibly have to say to Frank which required such secrecy; and why was it so pressing that it must be told that very night.

Torturing her mind with vain conjectures, Mrs. Ashley hastened her night toilette and dismissed her servant, that she might be free to act as she might deem best.

Wrapped in her heavy dressing robe, she sat gazing in the fire and thinking over the words she had overheard. Repulsive as such a course would once have been to her, she now determined to be present at that mysterious interview, and stealthily learn what confidence her daughter had to make to Frank.

If she could only gain the sitting-room without being detected, she could easily conceal herself in one of the deep recesses in front of the windows, over which heavy curtains fell. Once securely ensconced behind the folds of the drapery, she could hear all that passed between the two, and take her own measures accordingly.

She set her door ajar, and eagerly listened for Frank's step as he retired to his own apartment. It was so long before she heard any movement from that direction, that she began to fear he would defeat her intentions by awaiting Bessie's return without going to his room.

But at length came out, and no sooner had the glimmer of the light he carried in his hand been shut from the hall by the closing of his door, than the excited watcher flitted noiselessly from her room, descended the thickly-carpeted stairs without an audible footfall, and as silently entered the lower apartment.

The ruddy glow of the fire cast its warm gleams on the crimson covered furniture and flickered over the pictures on the walls. The air of luxury and comfort which pervaded the room caused her to mutter:

"Can those two young simpletons be plotting to throw away such a home as this? Madness such as that must be circumvented at any cost to myself. No—I am not wrong in doing anything that will save my child from ruin."

Fearing that Wentworth might speedily return, Mrs. Ashley, after a hurried glance around, ensconced herself on an ottoman behind the curtain, nearest the fire. She had taken the precaution to wrap herself in a large shawl before coming down, and she proceeded to make herself comfortable in her place of concealment.

Immediately in front of the recess a large arm-

chair usually stood, and she arranged this with the folds of the curtain in such a manner that she could easily see all that passed in the room.

With little fear of being detected, she then waited in breathless impatience for the return of the two on whose confidence she was about to intrude in so unjustifiable a manner.

The house was buried in that deep silence which comes with night in the country in the cold season of the year, and with ears sharpened to painful acuteness, Mrs. Ashley could detect no sound of approaching footsteps.

Five—ten minutes, and then the door was opened without the slightest promontory warning, and Wentworth came in, wearing a pair of soft slippers, and bearing in one hand his portfolio, and in the other his lamp.

He drew the table near the fire, placed them upon it, and then sat down with his head resting upon his hand, his eyes fixed upon the glowing coals with a dreamy and very sad expression.

He had not sat thus many moments when his thoughts were interrupted by the appearance of Bessie. She came in with a frightened expression, and said with a shiver:

"I was afraid to bring a light past Minny's door, lest she should see it, and I am all in a tremor at having to come down that dark staircase into the black-looking hall alone. Oh, Frank! I do not know that I am doing right to meet you in this clandestine manner, but there was no other chance to inform you of the result of my conversation with my father before I return to him to-morrow."

"Don't be nervous about that, Bessie. You and I have been reared together as brother and sister, and there is no more harm in your meeting me here to-night than if we really stood in that relation to each other. I am in a tremor of anxiety to hear what passed between you and my uncle. From your manner to-night I am sure favourably."

"Then my spirits woefully deceived you, poor Frank. I was happy to escape from the depressing atmosphere of Arden Place, and the sight of Minny's affectionate face brightened me up a little; but in reality my heart was very sad and apprehensive."

"On what grounds, Bessie? Don't torture me by circumlocution, for I cannot bear much more than I have already endured. A more miserable wretch than I have been for the last two months it would be hard to find. How did you introduce the subject to your father, and what did he say?"

"I believe he introduced it himself, and I took advantage of the opening to speak out. It is of no use, Frank; we shall never gain his consent to violate the conditions of grandpa's will, and he vows that Evelyn shall never marry. Do not feel hurt when I tell you what he said of her, for it is necessary that you should know it."

"What was it? I promise not to feel annoyed at you for repeating it, Bessie."

"He insists that she has no constitution, and must die early; and—and he said that she is liable to mental derangement. You know that her mother died in a *maison de santé*, but I do not believe that my sister has any taint of madness, in spite of papa's assertion."

Wentworth uttered an exclamation of rage.

"I tell you what my uncle means to do, Bessie: he will torture my poor darling till he drives her to madness; but he will first get some settlement from her which will enable him to retain her fortune, and at his death give it to Maitland."

"Oh, Frank! Frank! how can you suspect my father of such turpitude as that? If I could believe it, the little affection I have tried to cherish for him would die out at once."

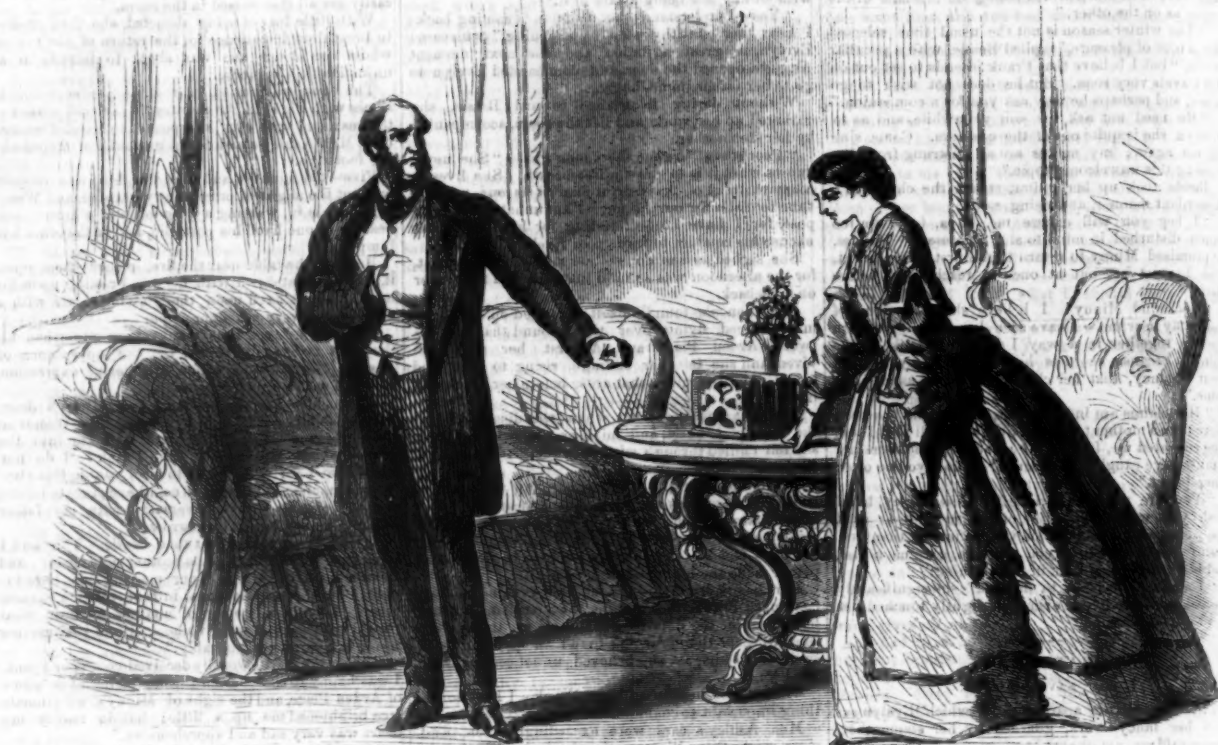
"Bessie, I cannot help speaking the truth, even if it does destroy your respect for my uncle. He is a base and heartless man; and I tell you he only hopes that such a fate may come to my poor Evelyn. She is in no more danger of losing her reason than I am, if I can rescue her from the infernal power of the man she is so unfortunate as to call father before he has time to carry out the infamous programme I believe he has laid out."

"Don't forget that Mr. Ashley is my father, too," pleaded Bessie. "You have much to bear, but I cannot bear him spoken of with such bitterness without extreme pain. You know that his will is indomitable, and he has vowed to me to-day that I shall hold you in honour bound to me. I saw Evelyn a few moments before I left, and warned her on what she must decide."

"And what did she say?" he eagerly asked. "She is wearied out with the life they lead here, and she told me that any escape from it will be welcome. She leaves her fate in our hands."

Frank sprang up, exclaiming:

"Eureka! then we shall baffle my uncle yet. Oh, Bessie, you are the dearest girl and the best of friends, to bring me such news as this."



[LEON THE INFLEXIBLE.]

Bessie apprehensively said:

"Hu-ush, Frank. You forgot that this interview must be kept a profound secret from every one; and if you go on so, Minny may overhear you, and come down to see who is making such a noise. We should be in a pretty scrape if she were to do such a thing!"

"Oh, bother about Minny! Tell me all about my eyes, and the ways and means to evade the Argus eyes set to watch her!"

"Well, sit down quietly, and listen to my plan. On this day week Kate's wedding takes place, and I have wrung from papa a reluctant consent that Evelyn shall go to it with me. Mrs. Ashley is to accompany her as a sort of body-guard, but when we are once in the crowd that will be there, it will be easy enough to find some one to occupy her attention a few moments in which Evelyn can be spirited away. She must seize that opportunity to join you, and before my father could hear of her evasion, you might take a night train and be far beyond pursuit."

"Yes," assented Frank. "So far, so good, if we can only carry your idea out. The difficulty will be to throw Aunt Augusta off her guard."

"Oh, we shall manage that some way. But it will be best for you to go away for a season, and give the impression that you intend to be absent some time. You can leave Rufus Welby to make such arrangements for you as will ensure success to your elopement. He has entered heart and soul into your interests, and he told me, the last time I saw him, that he would do all that is in his power to see you and Evelyn. He seems deeply interested in all that concerns my sister."

"Yes, he pities her, as everyone else does who has had an opportunity of seeing how she is treated. I shall call on Rufus in the morning, and ensure his assistance."

"You must go away to-morrow, Frank, but I will communicate with you through Rufus. You can remain in the neighbourhood incognito, and make your appearance at The Oaks on the morning of the wedding, at the hour agreed on for the elopement."

"Nothing could be better, Bessie, and I consent to your entire programme. I can trust you to spirit Evelyn away from that detestable step-dame of hers. You are too clever to be outwitted by such a woman as Aunt Augusta."

"I will do my best to bring the affair to a happy termination, and I do hope that your disappearance will put an end to the necessity for so much deception on my part. I sometimes feel as though I am a domestic Guy Fawkes, though I trust that our plot will not meet the fate of his."

"Only keep Evelyn's courage up, and I have no fears for the result, for there is no traitor to betray us."

The concealed listener winced, and made an involuntary movement, which Wentworth detected, and he turned his eyes to the spot from which it proceeded with an expression of eager inquiry which caused Mrs. Ashley's heart to die within her.

If he should draw aside the curtain, and discover her in the contemptible character of an eavesdropper, what could she say in her own defence that would restore to her the respect of the young plotters—save her from the contempt of her own child?

Frank hurriedly said:

"I surely heard a movement in that recess, Bessie. I will go and see if there is anyone there. It would be terrible to have our plans overheard and exposed hereafter."

"Oh, nonsense, it is only the wind—it is beginning to rise—don't you hear it moaning through the trees? No one can be there, so sit still and listen to me. Let us complete the details of our enterprise, for this is the last opportunity we shall have for doing so. There can be no one in the house at this time of the night but those who belong here. The servants have gone to bed, and Minny is safe in her own room."

"I suppose you are right, Bessie, and we are the only night owls about just now. In the first place, I must write to Evelyn, and give her an account of what we have agreed on. I brought down my portfolio for that purpose."

"That is exactly what I was going to propose. I will find the means of transferring your letter to her without suspicion, though I know that we are constantly watched when we are together. You must have it in readiness by morning, as I promised papa to return to Arden immediately after breakfast."

"You left my uncle to believe that you may eventually yield to the fate they all seem bent on forcing on us. Minny is as bad as he is on that point."

"Don't say anything against Minny, for you know she loves us both, and thinks she is acting for the best, though she takes a wrong view of what will make us happy. What could I do, Frank, but continue to act a part to my father? He has not the faintest suspicion that I have a lover of my own; that I am as anxious to escape the shackles they would impose on us as you can be, and I dread the hour in which that revelation is made to him."

"And well you may. I know something of my uncle's white rages, and I shrink from the thought of what you may have to bear. If he proves unmanageable, what will you and Delancey do?"

She sighed heavily, then half smiled and said:

"We may be forced to follow your example, but that shall be the last resource with me. It will be enough for me to help one child to desert him, without running away from my father myself."

An hour was spent in arranging the minutest details of the proposed elopement, to which Mrs. Ashley listened with suppressed breathing, treasuring each particular in her memory for future use.

At length Bessie arose and said:

"I have spoken of everything I could think of that can be necessary, and now I will retire and leave you to write your letter to Evelyn."

Wentworth bade her good night and went with her to the foot of the staircase, holding the light till she descended and had time to take refuge in her own room. He then came in, closed the door carefully, and sat down to his task.

Page after page was filled, and the weary watcher thought he would never end the outpourings of his love. She was afraid to make the slightest movement, lest his quick ears should detect it, and she sat chilled and wretched, wondering if he would ever cease. By this time the fire had died down, and the room was beginning to grow cold, the rising wind forced a passage for itself around the old-fashioned window, and filled the recess in which she crouched with the cold outside air.

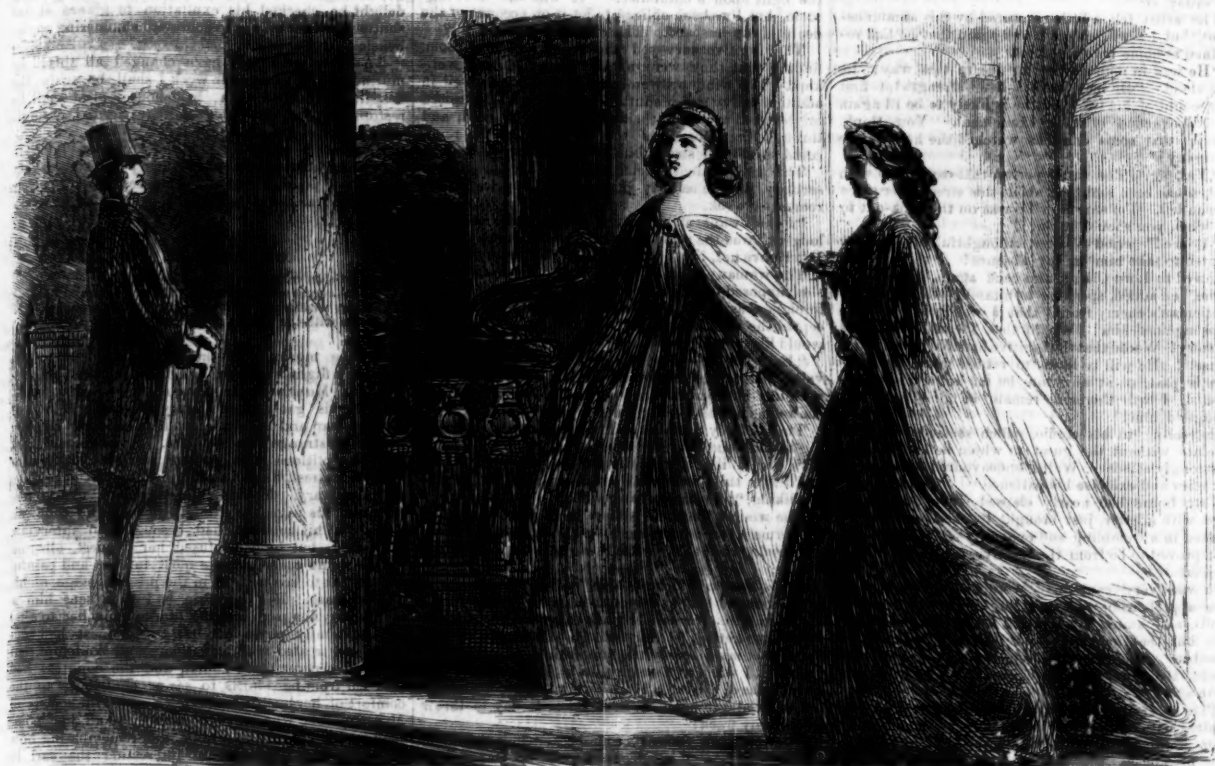
Frank himself at length became conscious that he was growing chilly, and he threw the brands together, hastened to a conclusion, and to the intense relief of Mrs. Ashley, he gathered up his writing materials, and passed from the room without casting a glance behind him.

After waiting a few moments to assure herself that there was no danger of his return, she crept from her hiding-place and stood a few moments before the dying fire. A sudden blaze that flashed up from an expiring fire-brand revealed her face, wearing a pale, set expression, and her locked lips unclosed to mutter:

"Who would have believed that their rebellion could have reached such a climax as this! There will be more than one visitor at Arden to-morrow, Miss Bessie; and for once I shall try my powers of persuasion against yours with success. There is now but one step between myself and ruin, and I must take it, cost what it will to others."

She glided up the darkened stairway, gained her own room, and was soon in her luxurious bed. But there was little sleep for the guilty lady of Ashurst that night.

(To be continued.)



[GOING TO THE OPERA.]

THE BELLE OF THE SEASON

By W. E. CHADWICK.

CHAPTER XLV.

Who 'scapes the snare
Once has a certain caution to beware.

Chapman.

But now so wise and wary was the knight
By trial of his former harmes and cares,
That he deserv'd and shunn'd still his slight:
The fish that once was caught new bait will hardly bite.

Spenser.

Doctor Mure and his companions continued to knock loudly at the door of Walter's rooms, demanding admittance; and Parkin for some time continued to reply to his demands that he had received orders to keep out all intruders. The policeman, at length, urged by the doctor, commanded the valet to open the door without further delay, and Parkin felt that a crisis had arrived which required a change of course. "Yes, yes!" he shouted. "In a minute, when I see how the patient is."

Retreating from the ante-chamber to the studio, he looked from the window of the latter apartment, and was just in time to see the fugitive disappearing around the first corner. Encouraged by the sight, Parkin busied himself for some minutes in the studio, paying no attention whatever to the remarks of Dr. Mure and his assistants; but after a delay sufficient to enable the fugitive to attain some distance, he admitted the pursuers.

"What do you mean by keeping us out all this while?" demanded the doctor, in a rage, as he entered the ante-room.

"I ought not to let you in at all," replied Parkin, in equal wrath. "I shouldn't think you'd have the face to come back here after being kicked out—"

The doctor interrupted him by flourishing the paper he had exhibited to the policeman in the street, and exclaiming:

"I have here a warrant to take the person of John Jones, an escaped lunatic, and return him to my licensed asylum, and I demand him to be given up to me immediately."

"I don't know any such person, Mr. Bowen," said the valet, with sarcastic emphasis on the name lately assumed by the doctor when acting as nurse.

The doctor flushed angrily, and replied:

"No evasion! You know very well I refer to the sick person in the other room."

"Oh, you do?" said Parkin, coolly, inwardly delighted at the lengthy parley he was holding with the pursuers.

The doctor replied by bidding his assistants to follow him, and proceeded through the studio to the bed-chamber lately occupied by the invalid.

His rage at finding it deserted was so great as to render him momentarily speechless.

"How do you intend to take the sick gentleman, Mr. Bowen?" demanded the valet, with a provoking smile.

The doctor turned upon him fiercely, finding his voice, and declared the fugitive must be concealed somewhere about the rooms, adding:

"He couldn't possibly leave the house yet, not having sufficiently recovered from his illness."

Parkin smiled more provokingly than before. A survey of the chambers speedily assured the pursuers that they were not likely to afford a hiding-place, and they reluctantly returned to the ante-chamber.

They had scarcely done so when Walter made his appearance.

Dr. Mure seemed inclined to slink away upon the entrance of the young artist, but the latter quietly intercepted his flight, demanding what he wanted.

"What right have you in my chambers, Mr. Bowen, or Doctor Mure?" he concluded. "What business have you to take advantage of my absence to come here and annoy my guest? What are these men doing here with you?"

The policeman explained how he had been enlisted in the doctor's cause, and why they had come.

The artist glanced towards the studio, as if he feared the conversation might be overheard by its object, and said, haughtily:

"I shall not give up my guest to Doctor Mure, be the consequences what they may. He is sane, and the doctor will be obliged to prove the contrary before he can take him away."

"I see that the lunatic has very skillfully imposed upon you, Mr. Lorraine," responded the doctor, with pretended meekness. "Perhaps you believe his mania to be the truth—"

"I do," was the response.

A look of fear and anxiety flitted over Mure's features, and he said:

"Then you think his name is not Jones?"

The artist replied in the affirmative.

The doctor scanned Walter's features earnestly, and made up his mind that the secret of the fugitive's identity had not yet been revealed to him, the fact that the artist made no allusion to the name of his

guest confirming this belief. He therefore drew a sigh of relief, and demanded:

"I want to know where your valet has hidden him. He is not in your rooms."

Walter directed a quick glance at his valet, who smiled reassuringly, and said, addressing Mure:

"He's where you won't find him, Mr. Bowen. By this time he's out of your reach."

The doctor started, grew pale, and cried out: "We are fools—dupes! The man we met on the stairs was the lunatic in disguise! And while we have been losing time here he is getting beyond our reach!"

With a look of rage at the triumphant valet, the doctor rushed from the room, followed by his assistants.

Gaining the street, Mure eagerly questioned the waiting coachman in regard to the direction taken by the seeming patriarch who had passed out directly after their entrance into the house, and was directed aright. He immediately set out in quick pursuit, followed by his assistant, the policeman returning to his duty.

"What does all this mean, Parkin?" asked the artist, after the departure of his pursuers from his chambers.

The valet explained the proceedings of the doctor. "And where is my guest?" inquired Walter, anxiously.

"I don't know, sir, but he's surely safe. After you went away he walked about the studio a little and said he felt quite well, sir. He then sat down by the window, and was praising your pictures, sir, when all of a sudden he turned faint-like and told me to look out of the window. I looked, sir, and saw Dr. Bowen, or whatever's his name, a walkin' up and down on the other side of the street, looking up at the house. Then another fellow as watched us ever since Bowen went away crossed over and talked to him, and up came a policeman, and they got a coach and came for the sick gentleman."

"Well?"

"Well, sir," continued the valet, "the gentleman said he wished he'd told you something, but it was too late. Then I thought of them patriarch clothes of yours, which you wore at that fancy-ball, sir, and as they don't look a bit outlandish, I dressed the gentleman up in 'em, and he slipped downstairs as they came in. I saw him turn the corner!"

"How unfortunate!" exclaimed Walter anxiously. "Where can he have gone? I am sure he had no money with him—"

"Begging your pardon, sir, he has. I gave him

my purse, which had the ten pound in it you gave me yesterday, sir."

The artist felt a little reassured by this announcement, but he wished again and again that he had remained at home with his guest.

"He was in no condition to flee in this way!" he said aloud. "He may have a little strength at first on account of his fears, but he is likely to be ill again in consequence of this excitement. You think, Parkin, that some one has watched the house since yesterday?"

"Yes, sir. The same person that came here with Bowen has been lounging about this street ever since Bowen left. I'm sure now he was on the look-out to see when you should go out!"

"I see!" cried Walter, thoughtfully. "They wanted to take him in my absence! I think I was followed to Lord Clair's, and back again. It seemed to me," he added, speaking to himself, "that the poor gentleman's enemy feared that I was going to take steps against him! Would that I could solve this mystery! Would that the fugitive had told me all about himself! He will be likely to return when the pursuit is past, or at any rate let me know his whereabouts. I will therefore remain at home and await tidings of him!"

Retreating to his studio, which seemed strangely desolate without the guest to whom he had become so strongly attached, Walter endeavoured, to calm his anxieties and exercise his patience.

Two hours had nearly elapsed when Parkin entered with a letter, just brought by the postman, addressed in a trembling and evidently feigned hand.

It proved to be from the fugitive, although without a signature.

It was very cautiously worded evidently with some apprehension that it might fall into unfriendly hands, and stated simply that the writer was quite safe, but that he could not return to Mr. Lorraine's chambers without being seen by his enemies. He would, therefore, find a place of concealment and write again.

This letter allayed Walter's apprehensions, and he awaited with less anxiety the promised second letter.

On finding himself in what was to him a wilderness of houses, the fugitive had first thought of hastening to the residence of Lord Clair, whither Walter had gone. Apprehensive as he was, however, it seemed to him more than probable that Walter had been followed to his destination by one of the Dr. Mure's myrmidons, and that he himself would be discovered by his enemies if he went to his lordship's residence in search of his friend. He then thought of going into a shop and writing a note to Walter, begging him to come to him and appointing a rendezvous, but he reflected that such a proceeding would be looked for by his enemies, and Walter's movements would be watched.

It was imperative to relieve the artist's anxieties, and he finally summoned courage to venture into a pastry-cook's shop and call for pen and paper, as well as food. It was here he had written the letter Walter received, and he himself dropped it in the nearest pillar-box on resuming his wanderings.

"I can only avert evil from Mr. Lorraine and myself," he thought, as he passed on through the quiet streets, "by leaving him alone, and proceeding to work out my destiny by myself! I must gather a little more strength, and can then go on well without his aid!"

Growing tired, the fugitive soon again stopped at a quiet-looking hotel, and procured a private room, in which he remained until evening, every moment of the time a prey to terrible fears.

With the approach of darkness, he entered the streets again, feeling safer in the fresh air than in the hotel he had quitted. He had effected a change in his disguise and had taken a stimulant to keep up his strength, and now began to think of providing a place of concealment for the night.

With this view, he consulted the notices on the houses of "apartments to be let," with eager interest, but he felt averse at making his wants known lest in some way he should come in contact with his pursuers.

At length, as he began to feel very weary, he came upon a quiet little brick dwelling, having beside its door a bill stating that apartments within could be let to a single gentleman, and that no other lodgers were taken.

His notice the fugitive read by the light of the street lamp, and after looking up and down the street to see if he were observed, he knocked on the door of the dwelling.

His summons was responded to by an elderly woman, to whom he stated his wish to look at the room to be let. "Come in, sir!" was the hospitable reply. "I'll show them to you!"

She closed the door behind the gentleman, and conducted him through a lighted passage, up a flight of stairs, and into the drawing-room.

"This is the sitting-room, sir," she said, setting the light upon a chiffoier. "It was the drawing-room, but I've been obliged to let it on account of the death of my husband. There's a bed-room off it!"

The fugitive surveyed the room and bed-room, finding that they were neatly furnished and well-kept. The windows were curtained and possessed in addition heavy green shutters which could be raised or lowered at will by simply pulling a cord, and through their interstices the occupant of the room could survey the street, himself remaining unseen.

This arrangement seemed to the fugitive to promise security, and he eagerly demanded the price of the rooms per week.

"I shall want a guinea, being we take no other lodgers," was the reply. "Have you references?"

"I have not, but I am willing to pay in advance!" The woman hesitated and then, remarking that she supposed the gentleman was a newly-arrived foreigner, as his appearance was rather singular, accepted the week's payment, asking him how soon he would like to take possession.

"Immediately—this moment!" answered the invalid, taking the easy-chair. "I have no luggage with me, but can procure some to-morrow. I suppose the rooms are ready for occupancy?"

The landlady assented and lighted the gas, proceeding to make the lodger comfortable.

"I would like a good dinner," he said, when she had drawn the shutters and arranged the furniture to her liking, "and as soon as possible."

The woman lingered a few moments to arrange the terms upon which her lodger's meals were to be prepared, and then withdrew to see about the dinner.

"It is very comfortable here," thought the fugitive, as he changed his chair for a sofa, upon which he lay at full length. "I will devote a day or two, perhaps a week, to getting strong enough to bear the excitement that must follow the unmasking of my enemy, and then I will claim my rights! I am sure that I am safe here! Doctor Mure certainly cannot find me out, after all the pains I have taken to-day to throw him off my track!"

The fugitive's thoughts soon became indistinct, and he sank into a dose from which he was finally awakened by the entrance of his landlady, who set about laying the table for dinner.

The lodger made inquiries about her family, etc., while she was thus engaged, finding that it consisted of a mother and two daughters, living upon a small but certain income which it was desired to eke out by taking a single lodger.

He was quite relieved to discover that there could be no possibility of Dr. Mure's finding him in his present home, these women of course not being in the way of the doctor's inquiries.

The dinner of roast lamb and green peas was soon placed upon the table, and the fugitive found that he possessed a hearty appetite, in consequence of the day's exertions, that was quite in contrast to his recent weakness.

After the simple pudding had been served, with a cup of coffee, the lodger called for a pen and ink, and proceeded to indite another letter to Walter Lorraine, informing him that he had found a safe hiding-place, and that he found himself quite strong and well. He begged the artist not to be anxious on his account, as he had money sufficient for his wants, and he concluded by stating that in a few days he hoped to have the pleasure of unveiling the mystery by which he was surrounded, and declaring his identity not only to Walter but to the world.

The utmost caution was shown in every line and word of the letter, so that if it should fall by accident into the wrong hands no clue could be found to the whereabouts of the writer.

When he had finished writing, and had sealed and addressed the letter, the fugitive put it in his breast-pocket, murmuring:

"I must drop this letter into a box at a distance from my present quarters. I will even take a cab to a distant part of the city for the purpose, in order not to leave the faintest trace by which my enemies may find me!"

He sank into a reverie from which he occasionally started to glance apprehensively and suspiciously at the door, as if he expected to see his pursuers enter.

It seemed hard to realise that he was free—free at last!

The delicious sense of freedom he now enjoyed had not been his in his wild flight along the seashore, for the fear of pursuit had absorbed every thought and called forth every energy. It had not been his when recovering from his fever he had received the tender and filial attentions of Walter Lorraine, because he had known that his retreat was known to his enemies and had feared their arrival at any moment.

But in this quiet lodging which he had gained by the exercise of every precaution he had surely nothing to fear.

Thus he thought, but the sufferings of years could not be forgotten in a moment, and even in his greatest delight he checked his exultation to glance at the shuttered windows or the door with shuddering apprehension.

"Another week will have changed all this!" he murmured. "In another week I shall be again the despairing inmate of a mad-house, or I shall be restored to my daughter and my rights! A single week! I must get strong for it!"

He arose, prepared for bed, and was soon lying in his comfortable couch, endeavouring to dismiss every thought of possible evil and compose himself to sleep. In this he was successful, soon sleeping like a weary child.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Memories on memories! to my soul again.
There comes such dreams of vanished love and bliss,
That my wrong heart, though long injured to pain,
Sinks with the fulness of its wretchedness.

Phoebe Carey.

On the morning of the day subsequent to the fugitive's flight from Walter Lorraine's chambers, the Earl of Montford was crunched in a great arm-chair in his gas-lighted library, wearing a look of gloomy fear and suspicion, such as had characterized him in his strange moods of late. Since his midnight and surreptitious visit to the bedside of Walter Lorraine's guest, he had shut himself up in the solitude of the library, denying admittance to every one excepting his page, the patient Jullian. The countess, alarmed at his conduct, had besought an interview with him, but he had refused her request, alleging that it would cause him the most intense and painful excitement to see any one in the present stage of his heart-disease. Her ladyship had then sent him a message by the page praying him to allow her to send for the family physician, but this request had not only been treated with impatience and contempt, but received a peremptory denial, and the countess had desisted from her efforts to see or contribute to the comfort of her husband, taking refuge in the society of Mrs. Tomlin, who listened patiently to all her complaints. The Lady Geraldine, too, remembering how well she had succeeded in interesting the earl in Walter's mysterious guest, essayed to gain admittance to the library, but his lordship betrayed positive fear on hearing her gentle voice at the door, and she was obliged to retreat, full of alarm at his strange behaviour.

The page kept his post just outside the library, evidently watching for a knock upon the street door that never came, for at every sound of a visitor he would start up, with his hand on the knob of the library door, as if to announce an expected arrival, and every time he sank back with a look of disappointment.

On the particular morning to which we have drawn the reader's attention, the page appeared more nervous and expectant than usual, starting at every sound as with an expectant look which soon faded, giving place to one of annoyance and sorrow.

But at length a peculiar knock, the same that always announced the earl's mysterious visitor, caused him to spring to his feet with a look of relief, and he hastened to the door in advance of the footman, who had been dozing in his chair.

The person whom he admitted was disguised as usual, but the page recognized him, and conducted him to the library, ushering him into his master's presence, then resuming his position outside the door.

The visitor found the earl cowering in his chair, and, as he entered, his lordship started up in a wild fright, putting out both hands as if to ward off an expected blow.

"Oh, it's you, is it," said the nobleman, as the new comrade advanced to his side. "How long I have waited for you! What has delayed you?"

As he spoke, the earl clasped his hands over his heart, which, with its tumultuous, irregular beatings, seemed to swell within him to twice its usual size, and beat wildly against its bars like a bird in the attempt at escape.

"I came as soon as I could, my lord," replied the visitor, removing his hat, and revealing his face to be that of Dr. Mure. "I have been detained by unexpected circumstances. But how white and ghastly you look, my lord? What can be the matter?"

"Oh, it's only that old heart-disease, doctor," replied the earl. "This excitement—that is, I've had some excitement lately, and it injures me! At times it seems to me as though my heart would burst."

The doctor looked grave, and said, "You ought to do something for it, my lord. Your disease is very serious, and I must say candidly you seem to be getting worse every time I see you. You do not look nearly so well as you did the other

right. If you object to employ your family physician my lord, I might prescribe for you."

"No, no!" interrupted the earl, with a shudder, that did not escape the keen eyes of Dr. Mure. "You're well enough in your way, doctor, but, really, I have no need of a physician; it is singular how everyone combines to annoy me about my disease, when all I require is perfect quiet, and freedom from excitement. But you haven't told me yet of your success. The lunatic is dead?"

"Not yet, my lord."

The earl turned an angry, frightened glance at the doctor, and pressed his hand closer over his heart.

"I have had some annoyances and drawbacks since your visit to Mr. Lorraine's rooms," remarked the doctor, deprecatingly, "and they have prevented my visiting you since that night."

"You don't mean to say that the person has escaped?" demanded the earl, hoarsely.

"Oh, no, indeed, my lord. I will explain everything as it happened, and you shall judge for yourself of my faithfulness. After letting you out of Mr. Lorraine's house that night, I returned to the sick man, and not to loss time, immediately mixed for him draught that, if he had taken it, would have put an end to him and his schemes for ever."

"Then he didn't take it?" inquired the earl, breathlessly.

"No, my lord, as you shall see. As I handed it to him, I noticed that he was recovering his consciousness and reason, and I hastened to induce him to drink it. My efforts were of no avail, and I tried to pour the drug down his throat, but he recovered his senses fully in the struggle, pulled off my disguise, and gave a yell that would have aroused the seven sleepers."

The earl gave a hollow groan, and clutched at his side, as if the pain at his heart had become unbearable.

"And then, my lord," continued Dr. Mure, "before I could recover myself or snatch back my false hair, Mr. Lorraine and his servant rushed into the room, and the patient told them who I was, and I was ignominiously expelled from the house."

"But why didn't you come here immediately and tell me all this?" demanded the earl, hoarsely and shrilly. "By this time everything is known. Who is that coming? I—I hear some one! Oh, my heart!"

He had started up wildly when declaring that he heard the approach of some one, but he now sank back, ghastly and death-like, his eyes staring out, his death coming in gasps, and his fingers clutched frantically at his heart.

"Oh, my lord," cried the doctor, in affright. "What can I do? No one is coming. I have not told you all!"

The earl showed signs of getting better at this announcement, and Mure seized a flagon that stood on the table, and sprinkled a quantity of the perfumery it contained in the face of the earl, then chafing his hands and loosening his garments.

"I—I feel better!" gasped his lordship, after several minutes had thus passed. "Go on. I want to hear more."

Mure resumed his seat, remarking:

"I quite thought that attack too much for you, my lord. There's no need for such excitement. After leaving Mr. Lorraine's chambers, I thought of coming to you, but concluded to spare you all anxiety, and not come until I could make a favourable report."

His lordship began to breathe more freely.

"I had some of my men with me, or near at hand, my lord, and set a couple of them to watch the house, one of them to follow Mr. Lorraine wherever he went, and the other to let me know of his first absence from his rooms, it not being easy to take the patient during his presence. And then I concocted a warrant on my own hook, to take the sick man with, and showed it to a newly appointed policeman, who knew more about Irish bogs than letters, not being able to read a word, although he pretended he could. Enlisting him, and taking my man, I went up to Mr. Lorraine's chambers, gained admittance after some time, and found that the patient had fled upon getting wind of my approach."

"What?"

"Yes, my lord; but wait and hear all—I have not yet finished. While there, Mr. Lorraine came in, and I made the discovery that the very cautious patient had not even told him his history nor given him the slightest clue to his identity."

The earl uttered a cry of joy.

"And then, my lord, I pursued the fugitive, in company with my assistant, the policeman dropping off upon his beat, quite contented with the liberal fee I had given him, and suspecting nothing whatever of the truth. I and my assistant followed the track of the fugitive, who was singularly disguised, and last night we came upon him in a house where he had found refuge, and took him prisoner. He is now in

safe custody, and no one suspects anything about him!"

His lordship was rejoiced at this statement, and regarded the doctor with keen scrutiny, becoming quite satisfied of his truthfulness and sincerity.

Suspicious as was his nature, he would have taken the alarm immediately if he had been less absorbed in his own emotions, and had noticed the frequent apprehensive glances the doctor cast in the direction of the door.

In truth, the doctor and his assistant had searched diligently and unrelentingly for the fugitive, had traced him through several streets, had found out the first cabman he had employed, had been driven to the spot where the invalid had first alighted, but beyond that could discover no trace of him.

The quarter of the town to which the fugitive had first proceeded was at a long distance from the one to which he had driven in the second cab, and the latter vehicle had not been taken from a cab-stand, and had happened to be passing at the moment he signalled it.

These facts, coupled with the other precautions adopted by the fugitive, completely baffled his pursuers, and Dr. Mure's statement of having captured him was simply a fabrication to allay the earl's fears and to gain money.

He had, however, not yet given up the pursuit, having stationed one spy in the vicinity of Walter Lorraine's residence to watch for the return of the invalid there, or to follow the artist, should he set out to visit the fugitive elsewhere. He had also stationed an able assistant near the mansion of the Earl of Montford, and between these two he hoped soon to effect the recapture of the fugitive.

"Doctor," said the earl, in a hoarse whisper "we must prevent any future escape! You must put him out of the way without delay. You understand?"

"I do, my lord. I will obey your commands. The next time I come here I shall bring positive proofs of his death. Or would you prefer to see him for yourself?"

"Oh, no, no! I could not look upon him dead!" cried the earl, with a shudder.

The doctor smiled so significantly that his lordship started, demanding hurriedly what it was he suspected, that he should look so strangely.

"The truth, my lord!" was the cool response.

"The truth! Why, why, doctor, you know who the patient is! I've told you—"

"Yes, my lord, I know who the patient is!" replied Mure, emphatically. "I have listened for years to his talk—if you will, his ravings! I know the whole story!"

The earl seemed hardly to possess life enough to murmur:

"Well, what do you want to keep it all secret? You know you're implicated, too!"

"I know it, my lord, and I shall confine my demands to something reasonable—say double my promised reward!"

His lordship hastened to promise this, and ensure the continued secrecy of the doctor, who then said:

"If you could give me some money to-day, my lord, I should like it very much. My expenses have been heavy of late, those assistants requiring good pay and support!"

"True," answered the earl. "I will give you something now, but the larger part of your reward will be paid only when you bring me the proofs of his death. It shall be ready for you whenever you come!"

The doctor looked a little disappointed that he was to have but a small sum until the death of the fugitive, but he concealed the emotion, watching the earl unlock a drawer in the table beside him and produce a single hundred-pound bank-note.

As deeply in debt as his lordship was, he always managed to have a supply of money on hand, perhaps with a view to paying Doctor Mure.

Handing the bank-note to the doctor, he repeated his remark that the entire sum promised should be ready for him whenever he should bring the information of the fugitive's death, and he then made several inquiries in relation to the present whereabouts of the invalid, all of which the doctor answered without hesitation, having prepared his replies beforehand.

When the investigation was concluded the doctor arose, saying:

"I shall return in a day or two, my lord, with proofs of the—of the lunatic's death. In the meantime, have no anxieties whatever in regard to him. He is safe in my keeping, closely guarded, and in a continual state of stupor, under the influence of drugs, so that there can be no possibility of his escaping or making you trouble. Meanwhile, my lord," he added, "if you'll allow me to make a suggestion, I would beg you to see a doctor—"

"Nonsense!" interrupted the earl, impatiently. "It is true that at times my heart seems gnawed by a vol-

ture, and at other times to be squeezed between iron fingers, and again seems to swell almost to bursting; but it is in consequence of my late excitement. I am not at all old yet, and my family were renowned for their long life and excellent health. I shall live forty years yet, if I am reasonably careful."

"You may, if you are very careful, my lord," said Dr. Mure, impressively; "but if you allow yourself to become excited easily, you may drop off without a moment's warning."

The earl received this statement as emanating from a desire to practice upon him with medicines, and dismissed it without further thought.

The doctor soon after took his departure.

When he had gone, the earl, reassured by Mure's false assertions in regard to the fugitive, arose, flinging aside the shawls with which he was encumbered, and summoned his page, who seemed surprised, on entering, to behold the favourable change that had taken place in his lordship's aspect.

"Turn off the gas and open the curtains, Julian," commanded the earl, walking to and fro. "I feel better—in fact, quite well again."

The page expressed his pleasure at his lordship's recovery, and hastened to obey his commands, while the earl quitted the library and proceeded to the morning-room, the resort of the family after breakfast.

At the moment of his entrance it was occupied by the countess, the Lady Geraldine, and Mrs. Tomlins. The former was discussing with the latter the propriety of giving a ball during the illness of the earl, and lamenting that his singular malady should have increased just as she was in the midst of her bridal festivities. The Lady Geraldine was seated at a little distance, engaged with the morning paper, and quite oblivious of the conversation between her companion and the countess.

The ladies looked up in surprise at the entrance of the earl, the countess having been informed that very morning by the page that his lordship's illness was becoming greatly aggravated.

It was easy to see that he had been very ill, both in body and mind, and his hair looked much whiter than when he had last appeared in the family group. Geraldine arose with a smile to greet her uncle, and express her pleasure at his recovery; but he touched her hand but coldly and lightly, and seemed to shrink from her kind congratulations.

"I'm very glad that you are better, Egbert," said the countess, coming forward, with a winning smile. "But you look like a ghost. What have you been doing to yourself? Your hair is quite grey, and your face is all wrinkles. You actually look ten years older than you did the other day."

"I have been ill, Justina," replied the earl briefly, as he took a seat.

"True, Egbert; but you might have had a doctor, or, at least admitted your own need for your presence. But I suppose you are more used to the attentions of your page."

The earl assented, and the countess seated herself beside him, forgetting her late anger against him, and endeavouring to divert him by her gaiety and good-humour. In this she was soon successful, the earl flinging aside all disturbing thoughts, and seeming to experience a pleasant relief in listening to the court gossip with which his wife entertained him.

Mrs. Tomlins, on being noticed by the earl, offered her congratulations upon his recovery, and then glided from the room, leaving the family alone.

"Don't go, Geraldine, dear," said the countess, as the maiden seemed about to follow her companion. "I need your services with your uncle. I want a grand ball, you must know, Egbert," she added, caressingly; "a much grander one than that you gave lately. I've had so many calls, and been invited out so much already, that I really ought to give one next week. Will you be well enough then, Egbert, and shall I send out the invitations?"

The earl reflected that before the next week should have arrived, he would probably be possessed of proofs of the fugitive's death, and he granted his wife's request, remarking that the gaiety that would be afforded by a ball was all that was required to quite restore his health and give the proper tone to his mind.

"And this evening," he added, "if you ladies are disengaged, I shall be happy to escort you to the opera. Our box, you know, is engaged for the season."

Both the Lady Geraldine and the countess were passionately fond of music, and accepted the invitation, while venturing to remonstrate against a premature use of the earl's newly-recovered strength. His lordship smiled, and declared that he should be quite well by evening, his recovery being always as sudden as his attacks of illness.

The Lady Geraldine spent most of the day in her own apartments, but when evening came made her appearance in the drawing-room, looking quite regal

in her beautiful evening dress. The countess was awaiting her, and stated that the carriage was in waiting, and that the earl would be down directly.

Even while she was speaking, his lordship entered the room, looking much better than his wife had expected, in full evening dress, and he escorted the ladies to the carriage.

As they descended the steps of the mansion, the full light in the corridor behind them revealed their persons distinctly, and they were not unseen.

At a little distance from the mansion stood a well and fashionably-attired gentleman, leaning upon a walking-stick. There was nothing remarkable in his appearance, his hair and long whiskers being of the fashionable colour, and curled, and his dress being very quiet, and there was nothing singular in the fact that as he was approaching the mansion he paused to notice the egress of its inmates.

And yet that well-dressed, quiet gentleman was no other than the mysterious fugitive.

With the money given him by Parkin, he had purchased his present attire and disguise, and had, with many changes of cab, come to the vicinity of the Earl of Montford's residence for the purpose of dropping into a letter-box his note to Walter.

What other motive had actuated him in coming to this particular spot remains to be seen.

The fearful, frightened look that had hitherto characterized him, had altogether disappeared. His countenance wore an expression of coolness, calmness, and self-reliance. His eyes had a look of determination and courage, and his bearing was full of resolution and self-possession.

That he was still weak was evidenced by the fact that he leaned rather heavily upon his cane; but he was stronger than might have been expected, considering his recent attack of fever.

He looked a little surprised when the door of the mansion was flung open, and the countess, robed in a dress of silken tissue, scarlet in hue, contrasting with her swarthy complexion, swept down the marble steps and was assisted into the carriage by an obsequious footman.

But when the radiant Geraldine, with her white opera-cloak falling accidentally from her snowy shoulders, followed the countess, the fugitive breathed hard, setting his teeth firmly together to prevent the utterance of a sound, and tightened his grasp upon his walking-stick. There were sudden tears in his eyes as they rested upon her glowing beauty, and his lips quivered with strong emotion, showing that his being was stirred to its very depths.

A moment later and the earl descended the steps, and at the sight of him the fugitive's countenance grew stern and hard, and his lips acquired an almost fierce expression.

The earl stepped into the carriage, gave the order to the footman, in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard by the observer, and the vehicle then whirled away with its living freight.

For a moment or two the fugitive looked after it, and then he resumed his walk, passing the mansion with an unusual stateliness of bearing.

He had scarcely passed it when he encountered an individual who seemed to be strolling up and down the street while waiting to be joined by a friend.

This person he recognized as one of Dr. Mure's keepers—the same one who had accompanied him to Walter's chambers. He was the one stationed by the doctor in the vicinity of Montford House, to watch for the fugitive, should he attempt to effect an entrance there.

As the fugitive recognized this man, he became paler, realising that his way was hedged about with perils and difficulties, and that he needed to exercise the utmost caution and circumspection.

But his pallor was his only sign of emotion.

The man looked at him keenly, as he looked at every passer-by, but not a muscle of the fugitive's countenance flinched, and he gave not the slightest token of recognition, but walked carelessly and slowly onward, even twirling his stick as he proceeded, that he might not seem as weak as he really was.

The keeper had no suspicion of his identity, and after his first keen, quick glance, did not look at him again. Still the fugitive did not feel safe until he had placed several streets between himself and Montford House.

"I have seen that my way is not clear," he then mused. "If I proceed as I intended, I shall be taken by Mure and his assistants, who are on the watch for me. I must arrange another plan. I should like to see her again!" he added. "I had such a brief glimpse of her on her way to the carriage. That keeper failed to recognise me, and I shall be quite safe in following them to the Opera."

Acting upon his impulse, he signalled a passing cab, and was driven to the Opera.

He easily succeeded in obtaining an obscure seat, quite at the back of the house, where he was not likely to be noticed, and from this position he found

that he had a very good view of the boxes, several of which were already occupied.

Caring nothing for the music under the pressure of his anxieties, he gave himself up to watching the occupants of the earl's box, bestowing almost exclusive attention upon the Lady Geraldine.

If the maiden had looked radiantly beautiful when passing from her residence to the carriage, she looked far more so now, when sparkling with animation and pleasure.

Her dress looked simple yet very elegant, and her shoulders were now covered with costly lace, which seemed only to enhance her beauty. A curl or two strayed from her hands of hair, which were ornamented with a magnificent spray of diamonds, set to represent flowers. A few ornaments also adorned her arms and throat, but they were scarcely noticed in the splendour of her beauty and loveliness.

The fugitive gazed at her like one in a trance, her every movement being noted with a sort of adoring look. Once, as she smiled, in response to a remark from the countess, he half-opened his arms and started up from his seat, but he remembered himself in time to escape observation from his neighbours.

Noticing that she smiled and bowed to some one in the box opposite her own, he glanced in that direction, and beheld Lady Rosebury, charming in her mature beauty, accompanied by Raymond, Lord Rosebury.

He saw that her ladyship, whom he seemed to recognize, greeted the Lady Geraldine with a fond smile, and he also saw with what eagerness Lord Rosebury obtruded himself upon the maiden's notice. His greeting was returned by a bow of marked coldness, which seemed to discomfit his lordship, but he appeared reassured when the earl beckoned him to his box.

After communicating with Lady Rosebury, Raymond left her, soon after reappearing in the earl's box, where he seemed to meet with a cordial reception from all except the Lady Geraldine.

It was interesting to watch the studied coolness with which the maiden treated Rosebury, and how little it seemed to affect him, he appearing not even to notice it.

As he watched the scene, the fugitive seemed to comprehend thoroughly the situation of affairs, and a strange menacing smile rested for a few minutes upon his stern lips.

As he continued to regard the Lady Geraldine, there seemed to be something magnetic in his gaze, for the maiden moved uneasily, and a look of sadness rested upon her face like a cloud obscuring the splendour of the sun.

And then she turned her head, her gaze wandering over the house, at length resting upon the earnest face of the fugitive.

As she did so, it seemed to each as if each had experienced a magnetic shock!

The Lady Geraldine grew pale and leaned forward, with an eager expression, as if wishing to obtain a better view of the fugitive, and he returned her gaze for one moment, and then leaned forward, weeping silently.

For a moment only he gave way to emotion, which to his neighbours seemed, if they noticed it, but the effect of the music, and then he subdued it by a violent effort and lifted his head, a look of triumph in his eyes, and a smile of exultation on his lips!

Geraldine had turned away her gaze on his stooping forward, and when she looked again, impelled by a strange fascination she could not comprehend, the fugitive had left the building.

(To be continued.)

THE wife of a Bristol physician has passed the examinations necessary for her admission into the profession of medicine, and she now assists her husband in his practice.

POISONED WINE.—Messrs. Boudet, of Castelmoran, were convicted at the Imperial Court of Agen, in France, of selling wine containing a quantity of litharge, to reduce the acidity of pricked wine. Three persons had died in consequence of drinking it, and several others had their limbs paralysed. The judge sentenced them to one year's imprisonment, and imposed a fine of twenty pounds.

It appears from a return just issued that the net income, for educational purposes, of the Blue-coat School for the past year was upwards of £42,000. What a glorious sum would this be were it expended, as was the original intention of its pious founder, Edward VI., in the education of the poor! It was established "for the reception of helpless orphan children," but it gradually became appropriated to children of a class above.

THE THEORY OF A BRICK.—A boy hearing his father say, "Twas a poor rule that wouldn't work both ways, said, 'If father applies this rule about his work,

I will test it in my play.'" So, setting up a row of bricks, he tipped over the first, which, striking the second, caused it to fall on the third, which overturned the fourth, and so on, until all the bricks lay prostrate. "Well," said the little boy, "each brick has knocked down its neighbour. I only tipped one. Now I will raise one, and see if he will raise his neighbours." He looked in vain to see them rise. "Here, father," said the boy, "'tis a poor rule that will not work both ways. They knock each other down, but will not raise each other up." "My son, bricks and mankind are alike made of clay, active in knocking each other down, but not disposed to help each other up." "Father," said the boy, "does the first brick represent the first Adam?" The father replied: "When men fall, they love company; but when they rise, they love to stand alone, like yonder brick, and see others prostrate around them."

DR. LIVINGSTONE ON THE SLAVE TRADE.

NEXT forenoon we halted at the village of our old friend, Mbame, to obtain new carriers, because Chibisa's men, never before having been hired, and not having yet learned to trust us, did not choose to go further.

After resting a little, Mbame told us that a slave party on its way to Zette would presently pass through his village. "Shall we interfere?" we inquired of each other. We remembered that all our valuable private baggage was in Zette, which, if we freed the slaves, might, together with some Government property, be destroyed in retaliation; but this system of slave-hunters dogging us where previously they dared not venture, and on pretence of being "our children" setting one tribe against another, to furnish themselves with slaves, would so inevitably thwart all the efforts for which we had the sanction of the Portuguese Government, that we resolved to run all risks, and put a stop, if possible, to the slave-trade, which was now following on the footsteps of our discoveries.

A few minutes after Mbame had spoken to us, the slave party—a long line of manacled men, women, and children—came wending their way round the hill and into the valley, on one side of which the village stood. The black drivers, armed with muskets, and bedecked with various articles of finery, marched jauntily in the front, middle, and rear of the line, some of them blowing exultant notes out of long tin horns.

They seemed to feel that they were doing a very noble thing, and might proudly march with an air of triumph; but the instant the fellows caught a glimpse of the English, they darted off like mad into the forest—so fast, indeed, that we caught but a glimpse of their red caps and the soles of their feet.

The chief of the party alone remained, and he, from being in front, had his hand tightly grasped by a Makololo. He proved to be a well-known slave of the late Commandant at Zette, and for some time our own attendant while there. On asking him how he obtained these captives, he replied, he had bought them; but on our inquiring of the people themselves, all, save four, said they had been captured in war.

While this inquiry was going on, he boiled too. The captives knelt down, and, in their way of expressing thanks, clapped their hands with great energy.

They were thus left entirely on our hands, and knives were soon busily at work cutting the women and children loose. It was more difficult to cut the men adrift, as each had his neck in the fork of a stout stick, six or seven feet long, and kept in by an iron rod, which was riveted at both ends across the throat. With a saw, luckily in the bishop's baggage, one by one the men were sawn out into freedom.

The women, on being told to take the meal they were carrying and cook breakfast for themselves and the children, seemed to consider the news too good to be true, but after a little coaxing went at it with alacrity, and made a capital fire, by which to boil their pots, with the slave sticks and bonds, their old acquaintances through many a sad night and weary day.

Many were mere children, about five years of age and under. One little boy, with the simplicity of childhood, said to our men, "The others tied and starved us, you cut the ropes and tell us to feast; what sort of people are you? Where did you come from?"

Two of the women had been shot the day before for attempting to untie the thongs. This, the rest were told, was to prevent them from attempting to escape. One woman had her infant's brains knocked out, because she could not carry her load and it; and a man was despatched with an axe, because he had broken down with fatigue. Self-interest would have set a watch over the whole rather than commit murder; but in this traffic we invariably find self-interest overcome by contempt of human life and by blood-thirstiness.—Livingstone's Expedition to the Zambesi.

(LIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE.—We have heard that the directors of this company have determined to recommend a dividend at the rate of two-and-a-half per cent. per annum, for the six months ending the 31st of December. The last, and, indeed, the first dividend was at the rate of five per cent. per annum, therefore the present is a very serious falling off. We understand, however, that the decrease is owing mainly to the large local rates which have been charged upon the work. We believe that the bridge has been assessed at something like 800*l.* for the Somersetshire side, and 800*l.* for the Gloucestershire side.

DORA NEAL.

CHAPTER I.

THERE are few men who reach the age of thirty-five without being able to look back on many errors, many follies; and it may not be amiss to hold up a beacon-light, a warning signal for those who, with the flush of youth warm on the cheek, and its dewy still bright and clear on their buoyant hearts, are beating out on life's solemn voyage.

As I sit here writing, on this splendid autumnal morning, thought goes back over the lapse of years, and memory brings before me, with startling vividness, the scene I am about to paint for you—a quiet sea-side village—the yellow sands of the beach strewn with pebbles and shells; rocks draped with fantastic weeds; a bold cliff jutting into the waters; a few birds idly skimming the waves; and beyond an unpretending inn, and a few brown cottages to the left, entirely tenanted in winter.

Such was the place whither I had gone in my twentieth summer to spend a college vacation, and accompanied only by my friend, who, like me, preferred to any of the more fashionable resorts, where our sisters and friends were flitting away the season.

An abundance of sea-fowl haunted the rocks, and what with hunting and fishing, our time passed pleasantly enough.

Occasionally we read Shakespeare, or dipped into some charming romance, or passed an hour in sketching, and on the afternoon of the last day of summer, I was attempted to sketch the sea-view from the cliff where I had perched myself. Suddenly a boat shot into sight, a graceful sail-boat, with two fishermen to manage it, and a group in whom I began to feel a deep interest.

"There," I exclaimed, "the boat is just what I wanted to make my sketch complete, and will give it a most picturesque effect! Those fishers are as worthy of notice as any ever seen in the Bay of Naples, and I will copy them to the best of my ability. But what is that?—something still more attractive. I declare!" And I leaned forward to obtain a better view of the other occupants of the boat.

One was a slender, delicate woman, apparently an invalid, with what appeared perfectly inscrutable features, but I did not read human nature with such ease at that age as I do now, and felt a thrill of genuine compassion as I gazed at the wasted cheek, the broad, white forehead, and the thin hands, so transparent that you could have traced the path of each blue vein beneath.

Her head leaned wearily against a young girl, who seemed to me the very incarnation of youth, beauty and innocence.

Her abundant hair had the purplish bloom of a ripe damson, and nothing could have been richer than the heavy loops visible beneath the brim of her light chip hat; her eyes, which were bent on the lady, were of the darkest brown, and filled with a yearning tenderness which would have touched a less susceptible heart than mine; but, in the faultless chiselling of the features, the crystal clearness of the complexion, and the vivid scarlet of her lips, she bore a strong resemblance to the woman I at once supposed to be her mother.

The white summer robe, a scarf gathered gracefully around her, and now and then floating on the wind, formed a lovely and striking picture, but the stranger's greatest charm was her evident unconsciousness of her own attractions.

Her sole thoughts seemed to be anticipating the wants of the lady she was supporting with such tender care, and I admiringly watched her as she smoothed the soft hair from the invalid's brow, arranged the shawl, and drew the fleecy hood over her head, to shield her from the cool sweep of the sea-breeze.

"I don't wonder the old masters could paint if they had such a face to inspire them," I said, audibly. "Perhaps the fair unknown may prove my inspiration, and I shall yet be an artist who will astonish the world!"

As I spoke, I sketched the figure of the young girl, and endeavoured to do justice to the charming origi-

nal, but disgusted with my failure, threw it into the sea, restlessly chafing against the crag, where the waters were seldom quiet.

On, on drifted the little boat, till its white sails were a mere speck in the distance—on, on, till it was entirely lost to sight.

An hour went by, and the soft clouds which flecked the sky like a swan's snowy plumage, had grown dark and stormy, and surged to and fro like tumultuous sea-waves; the waters had grown wrathful with omens of a tempest; the idle birds wheeled dizzily amid the spray, which began to break over the beach, and the wind-music struck into a stormy key.

Where—where was the little boat with the passengers who had awakened such an interest in me? Would it outride the storm? Would the sturdy fishers bring the boat and its occupants safe to land?

Though the two ladies were strangers to me, I asked myself these questions with an anxiety which told how strong was the impression which had been produced upon me, and finally launched a boat and started in pursuit.

I had rowed but a short distance when I perceived the little craft of which I was in search, and in tones which rang over the waters like the blast of an Alpine horn, I shouted:

"Ho, there! are you all safe?"

With what eagerness I listened to the reply which soon came ringing to my ears:

"No! no!" came from one of the men; "didn't you see the handkerchief Miss Neal was holding up as a signal of distress? A flaw of wind struck us; our sails are in tatters, and we can't keep afloat much longer. Besides, the ladies are drenched with rain. If you can help us, bear a hand! Bear a hand!"

A few steady strokes sent my boat so near the ill-fated craft that I could see the marble face of the invalid and the tremulous lips and pallid face of the girl.

"Save my mother!" she exclaimed, as I shot alongside. "In such an hour I have no thought of myself!"

"Heaven helping me, I will save you both," I replied; and with all the gentleness I could summon, I lifted them into the boat.

"We will take care of ourselves," cried the fishermen; "row back to the shore, and give not a thought to us. This is not the first time we have seen a boat go to pieces in an August gale."

Thus we parted, and though the waves ran high, and the storm-clouds hung heavily above, we reached the shore in safety. Then I led the ladies I had rescued to their lodgings in a quiet cottage not far from that where we had taken up our quarters, and was overwhelmed with thanks for the "noble part I had acted." As I left the house, two cards were slipped into my hand, and I read, as follows, in a clear, delicate, cursive hand:

"Mrs. M. B. Neal."

"Dora Neal."

"And," I said to myself, "I shall consider this as good as an invitation to call, and leave no honourable means untried to gain Miss Dora's acquaintance."

With these words I walked back to my lodgings, and sat on the piazza, recalling the particulars of my meeting with the fair stranger; the gentle ways which had charmed me, the shy droop of her eyelids, the unconscious tremor of the slight fingers as I clasped them at parting, and wondering if I had not indeed met my ideal, in the sweet, young stranger, when a figure I could have sworn was hers came flitting toward me. She had put on a cloak, but her head was uncovered, and her hair damp with rain-drops and ocean-spray, while her face had a look of thoughtfulness beyond her years.

"I must beg pardon for again intruding upon you," she said, in a voice of pathetic sweetness, "but what can I do? I am an utter stranger here, and know not where to send for a physician for my mother, who is very ill. The shock she has just had has prostrated her once more, and I fear hemorrhage of the lungs will ensue unless she has immediate attention."

"Dr. Richards lives in an adjacent village," I replied; "and I will go for him as soon as possible."

"How long will it probably be before you return?" she asked, in a low, earnest tone.

"Not more than an hour, I hope, and meanwhile you must be as brave and calm as you can. Avoid all excitement in her presence, if you would prevent serious consequences."

"Be assured I shall do my best," she said, sadly, and glided away.

When she had gone, a second and wiser thought crossed my brain, and I followed the new suggestion.

"Telling my friend the circumstances, I begged him to go for the physician, while I should remain with the invalid and her daughter during his absence. Then I hurried to the cottage, and Dora sprang to meet me at the door.

"It seemed cruel to leave you alone with your sick mother," I observed, in explanation of my course; "and therefore I have come to share your vigil and assist you, if need be, while my chum goes over to call Dr. Richards."

She softly murmured her thanks, and entered the invalid's room, and I sat down to await the physician.

By the light of the argand lamp, I could distinguish the simple furniture of those sea-side cottages; the straw matting on the floor; the white muslin curtains flowing over the windows; the cane chairs, the mahogany table, the mantelpiece, with its branching coral and beautiful shells, and the small mirror in its twisted frame; but the guitar, lying on the low lounge, the work-box, with its delicate implements, and the portable writing-desk, could have belonged to no other than Dora Neal.

Do not laugh, sober reader, when I add that I cautiously picked up a spray of mignonette she had dropped, and was tempted to purloin a little lavender glove, lying on the stand. Through the door I could catch occasional glimpses of the girl's loving administrations, and now and then she came out and addressed a few words to me. At length the doctor arrived, and after first shaking hands with me, was ushered into the invalid's room.

My eyes followed him as he bent over Mrs. Neal, and when he came forth my friend and I accompanied him to the door.

"Is she really ill," asked Wilbur, "or is it only a nervous attack?"

"The lady has been ill, and is still delicate; she needs good care. But though her lungs have been weakened by a severe cough, I do not apprehend consumption."

"Did you tell her daughter so?"

"Yes; but she did not appear to be as much relieved as I could have hoped. It is evident she is very anxious about her mother, for she told me, when I left her, it was the only friend she had in the world."

"Poor girl!" I exclaimed, and Dr. Richards walked off, whispering:

"Good night, Bryant—don't let pity deepen into love!"

I smiled at the sally, and when my friend and I had again offered our services in case they should be needed, we took our leave.

Time rolled on, and scarcely a day passed in which I did not meet Dora Neal. Her mother was still feeble, but she insisted that the girl must have fresh air and exercise, and it was a pleasant task for me to guide her feet along the rocky path, to walk with her on the yellow sands of the beach, or give her a sail in a boat I had christened "Dora." Every heart has its golden age, and that was mine.

What mattered it to me, though the distant woods flanked in gorgeous dyes, and then put on a sober russet, that the autumn was wearing away? What though the *habitués* of other sea-side resorts were flying to their homes like a flock of birds emigrating to the sunny south land? What though duty called me to the classic halls where president and professors were wondering at my protracted absence? Life's "charming cup" had been held to my lips, and I could not thrust it aside.

One evening I sat on the cliff, which had been my favourite haunt, watching the silvery splendour of the moonrise, the tremulous gleam which shot across the waters, and the mellow radiance that gilded the rocks along the coast.

I had waited in vain for Dora Neal, and her presence had now become essential to my happiness. Suddenly, however, I heard a step, and in spite of the chagrin which had prompted me to pay her off in her own coin and keep aloof from her, should she make her appearance, I soon found myself hastening to meet her.

"Good evening, Mr. Bryant," she said, in her most winsome way. "Has anything happened, for you look grave and sad?"

"I believe I have a fit of the blues," I replied, gazing down into her face; "this is a lonely place without company."

"But you have your friend," interposed Dora, with a faint smile.

"My friend is a good fellow, and I have a sincere liking for him, but his companionship is not enough now. The day has seemed a month long, Dora, and you must know the reason why; you have perversely kept in the house from morning till night."

Again her eyelids drooped, the smile faded from her scarlet lips, and every feature grew mournful indeed. "I have had a sad and busy day, Mr. Bryant," she murmured, and I could see the tears gush through her jetty lashes.

"What do you mean?" I asked; "is your mother worse?"

"Yes," and her voice sank into a whisper; "the sea-air has not proved as beneficial as I could have

hoped, and though she has begged me to stay, I fear the worst if we do not have an immediate change of climate. To-day I have been packing, and to-morrow we shall leave, probably for ever."

"To-morrow!" I exclaimed. "I am sure you are unreasonably alarmed, and your removal is premature. Dr. Richards told me that though your mother's lungs were weakened by a cough, he did not apprehend consumption."

The girl shook her head dissentingly, and turning her great wistful brown eyes toward me, faltered:

"All our family have gone that way. I have good reasons for the deepest anxiety, Mr. Bryant, and—and if she dies, I shall be all alone in the world."

"Dora, dear Dora," I cried, sinking at her feet, "if the blow you so much dread should fall upon your young head, you will not be alone, for my love shall shield and protect you, if you will but accept it. I would lay down my life for you, Dora. I could ask no greater boon than to call you mine, to have you the light of my home as you are the joy of my heart. Tell me, oh! tell me whether I may hope for a return!"

Her little hand nestled in mine like a snow-white dove, a sudden light shot into her tearful eyes, and she faltered, while a burning blush swept o'er her face:

"You cannot hold me dearer than I hold you, Arthur Bryant; this quiet sea-side village has been a Paradise for me, because of your companionship."

At her confession, I broke into a lover's rhapsodies, and thought myself the happiest youth in the universe, but when I begged for a troth-plight, she drew back, and said, gravely:

"Not yet, not yet! I should be wronging you if I consented to a betrothal, when you know so little of me."

"I do not understand you, Dora Neal; you are my ideal, the only woman I shall ever love, could I live to the age of the old patriarchs!"

She averted her head, and I thought she must be in some severe mental conflict by the tremor which crept through her slight frame, but finally she riveted her eyes upon me, and resumed:

"Arthur Bryant, I do not doubt you think yourself sincere to-night, but it may be a passing fancy as evanescent as the foam on the wave."

"There you are unjust," I observed, with a lover's vehemence.

"No," she rejoined, steadily, "in this, if in nothing more, I am just. Love requires a test, and I have decided a plan which will prove yours."

"And what?"

"To-morrow I shall leave you and go away with my mother where I hope she will regain her health."

"Oh! Dora, Dora! let me follow you. I implore you—I cannot live without you!"

She hesitated a moment ere she resumed.

"No, Arthur, we will go alone; it is the middle of October now, and for three months you must neither see nor write to me. At the expiration of that time you shall be informed where I am, and come to visit me. Then your love will be put to a test, and I shall be proud and happy to consent to a betrothal if you still wish it. Good-night, dear, dear Arthur, for you have grown very dear to me in these few weeks."

I folded to my heart, and tenderly kissed her white brow, exclaiming:

"I accept your conditions, Dora; what an age three months seem in perspective!"

She did not speak, but her sorrowful face told me our parting cost her a keen pang, and when I rung her hand at the door of the cottage, her eyes shown through a mist of tears.

CHAPTER II.

THE day of Dora Neal's departure saw our trunks packed, and when the lumbering stage-coach rolled up to the inn-door, we took passage. As we passed the cottage where Mrs. Neal and her daughter had taken lodgings, Dora and her mother appeared on the steps, and I handed them in.

Both were quiet and lady-like; but the thick veil worn by the girl entirely concealed her face, save when as I assisted her to alight at the railway station, a gust of wind blew it aside. How beautiful she was, and how sweet the memories I was to carry back with me as I resumed my studies! I stood watching her till the carriage had whirled her out of sight, and then joined my friend.

A week later we had returned to college, and three months dragged wearily by. At the expiration of the time, I received the following note from Dora Neal, it was written on rose-tinted paper, sealed with a French motto, and exhaled her favourite perfume. With a lover's eagerness I opened it, and read as follows:

"DEAR ARTHUR:—At last, at last our probation is over, and the love you professed for me on the night of our parting by the sea-shore, is to be put to a test."

"My mother and I have been spending some time at a friend's, and I think her quite recovered. We are now in London, where we shall remain for several weeks, and there I hope to meet you. I shall await your coming with keen anxiety; though the world may not dream a burden lies heavy at my heart, and it is for you to say then, whether I am taking too great a liberty, when I subscribe myself,

"Your own Dora."

Dora's missive aroused the queries and conjectures which had perplexed me during our separation, but with the buoyancy of youth, I would not think evil, and dreamed on.

Indeed, I felt so sure of her being the perfect realization of my ideal, that I would have challenged anybody who had hinted that she was not the frouseide angel I believed her to be, devoted to her sick mother, till she had met me. I therefore resolved to obey her summons, and obtain leave of absence from college until the commencement of the following term.

My two sisters had been teasing my father to go to London, and the old gentleman could not resist our combined entreaties. He therefore gave me a liberal sum to defray our expenses, and we started for the city to which girls of rank and fashion look forward, like Moslem pilgrims to Moscow.

On reaching London, we enstalled ourselves at the most desirable hotel, and after dinner I took my way to the street and number which Dora had given me on a pretty card enclosed in her note. The name on the door-plate was not Neal, but I thought it might be a boarding-house, and rang the bell. The door was soon opened by a servant, to whom I said:

"Does Miss Dora Neal reside here?"

The man looked confounded, but at this juncture a voluble French maid sprang into the hall, exclaiming:

"Tis ma'amsele—entrez, entrez, Monsieur."

As she spoke I crossed the threshold, and was ushered into a drawing-room where a handsome woman advanced to meet me with well-bred ease. When greetings had been exchanged, and I had expressed my satisfaction that Mrs. Neal's health had been restored, I inquired for her daughter.

"I will go and call her," replied the lady, but presently she re-appeared.

The next moment I again stood face to face with Dora, and ere long laughingly queried what was to be my love-test.

"I cannot to-day find courage to tell you, but to-morrow you shall know."

With these words she adroitly dismissed the subject, and chatted on, recalling all our pleasant companionship at the seaside.

I was invited to stay and dine, dinner being served in Mrs. Neal's private room. My luncheon presided in the most dignified manner possible, and whenever I looked up, I could see Dora's face in the full flush of youth and beauty.

Everything ought to have passed off delightfully, but though I dared not acknowledge it myself, she did not seem quite the Dora whom I had befriended in the hour of need, whom I had loved, as I thought, with a love which could know no change.

Some subtle charm had gone, fading like the velvet green of the wood-moss, when the summer sunshine glazes upon it; or the delicate bloom from the rose, when shrill winds sweep by—but still I allowed myself to dream on.

The next morning I received a second note from Dora, which ran thus:

"DEAR ARTHUR:—I shall not be able to call on your sisters to-day, as you requested, but if they would like to go to the theatre to-night, my mother will be happy to have them occupy her box—No. 7."

"Yours in haste,
"DORA."

I had scarcely laid down the dainty sheet, when I heard an imperative rap, and who should walk in but Dr. Richards, the physician who had twice visited Mrs. Neal during her stay at the sea-shore. Of course I expressed my delight at meeting him, for previous to his being called to Mrs. Neal, I had been obliged to go to him with a hand I had injured with my fowling-piece, and we were therefore well acquainted.

"By-the-bye, Bryant," he said, with his own peculiar smile, "I have the strangest thing to tell you. I went to the theatre last night, and they had a fairy scene—a pretty sight, and in the queen of the furies, dancing like a sylph, I saw a familiar form and face."

"And who was she, pray?"

"Her professional name is Leoline, but she is otherwise known as Miss Dora Neal."

"Impossible, Dr. Richards!" and I felt the warm blood mount to my temples. "There might have been a resemblance, a strong resemblance, I allow;

but the idea of Miss Neal—the quiet, modest Miss Neal—being a public *danceuse*, is an absurdity. I shall take it upon me to refute such a slander!"

"Young man!" exclaimed the doctor, "I see I have touched you on a tender point, and I regret you are so deeply interested in one you cannot respect. Remember, I warned you, for I know more of human nature than you do, and feared you might fall into some snare."

"Your motives may be kind enough," I replied; "but I am certain you mistake."

"Well, there is one way of settling the matter!"

"How?"

"Go to the theatre, and satisfy yourself by personal observation," said Dr. Richards, as he walked away, leaving me in a perfect whirl of contending emotions.

I now recalled language I could not before understand, and the note I had just received.

All day I kept aloof from her, but night found me at the theatre.

I had decided to accept her mother's box, and was, with my sisters, soon seated in it.

The new play had proved very popular, and the house was crowded with the beauty, rank, and fashion of the capital.

The flash of jewels, the toss of plumes, the show of costly robes, the waving of fans in the perfumed air, formed a most imposing array, and had I not been occupied with other thoughts, I should have shared my sisters' delight.

More than one *lorgnette* was levelled at the latter, for both were young and beautiful, and presented a strong contrast—the elder being a brilliant brunette, the other a perfect blonde.

But I could not enjoy their triumph, for I was impatiently waiting for the curtain to rise. At length the orchestra began to play—slowly, as if drawn up by some wizard power, the splendid drop-curtain rose, and the play commenced.

By referring to the bill, I had ascertained that the fairy dance, in which Mademoiselle Leoline would appear, was the first scene of the second act, and mechanically I watched the different actors.

I was trying to believe the good doctor had made a mistake, and Dora Neal and the *danceuse* could not be the same, when the curtains once more arose, and revealed a scene I had never before beheld equalled on the stage.

That indeed was fairy-land—the velvet grass and mosses, the cool, dim vistas of greenery opening on every hand, the delicate flowers, blooming on shrub and tree, the silver jet and low murmurs of a fountain, the domes, minarets, arabesques of an enchanted palace fit to be Titania's home, the fairy waiters standing by the gilded portals, how exquisite they were!

The orchestral music now sank into the strains of a bewitching waltz, a German composition as ethereal as the dancers, who docted toward the green before the fairy palace. A burst of applause heralded the approach of the *danceuse*, and there she came, gliding through a dim vista—the radiant, bewildering Leoline.

I lifted my opera glass and scanned her intently, and I can see her to-day, after the lapse of fifteen years, just as she looked then.

She wore a muslin skirt, so profusely covered with spangles that it seemed one gleam of silver; a white velvet bodice, with pearls drooping from each shoulder, and coiled around her waist; a tiny golden crown encircled her head, and from each point blazed a diamond; her small right hand held a golden wand tipped with jewels, and as she circled through the mazes of the dance, she waved it gracefully to and fro.

But while the audience watched her with an admiring gaze, I sat bitter and cynical at the truth which forced itself upon me.

That young syren "had figured as the dutiful daughter in the quietest of sea-side villages;" those eyes had dared look tenderly into mine; that hand had been clasped in undeserved tenderness—the radiant Leoline, and shy Dora Neal were the same—I had been basely deceived.

I now realized what indescribable charm I had felt to be waiting during my visit to her lodgings, and understood the allusions which had hitherto been vague and indistinct.

She did not appear to notice me while the fairy scene was being enacted, but when at the close of the entertainment, she was called before the curtain, and with white arms wreathing aloft, and feet half buried in the flowers which rained around her, bowed her acknowledgments, our eyes met in an earnest, inquiring gaze.

I intended that mine should be eloquent with the bitter scorn burning at my heart, and for an instant she grew deadly pale; but then regained her self-possession.

The curtain had scarcely fallen, when I was beckoned into the stage box, where I found Mrs. Neal gathering her thick shawl about her.

"Well, Mr. Bryant," she said, earnestly, "you have to-night seen my daughter in her true character."

"Yes, madam, I begin to understand how I have been misled; I shall never put any faith in womanhood again, never love or trust more, what may prove as illusive as the mirage of the desert."

"You speak bitterly, Mr. Bryant."

"I feel at warfare with all the world, madam; it was heartless to practise such a ruse."

"Here comes Leoline!" rejoined the woman, "I will leave her to make her peace with you," and she swept from the box.

In another instant her daughter entered; she had drawn a red opera cloak over her stage dress, and from the white silk lining of the hood gathered about her face, it gleamed out pale and statuesque, as if it had been hewn from marble.

"Arthur," she faltered, do you still wish for a betrothal?"

"No, no, the dream is over; as Dora Neal, I loved you—as Mademoiselle Leoline, the danseuse, I despise you, and scorn your arts."

"Arise!" she echoed, drearily. "Oh! Arthur; come into the green-room and let me explain."

I reflected a moment, and then resigning my sisters to the care of Dr. Richards, and a certain friend who had made his way into our box, followed the danseuse into that nondescript place, the green-room of a theatre. Remnants of stage wardrobes, with other paraphernalia, which looked coarse and gaudy away from the glitter of the footlights, littered the room; the few fairies who lingered there seemed like ordinary mortals, and the manager was scolding the call-boy for some omission of duty.

The danseuse pointed me to a seat, and moving to the manager, whispered a few words in his ear. The room was immediately cleared, and I was left alone with Leoline. For a time a painful silence reigned, and the ticking of my watch could be distinctly heard. At length she sprang towards me, and crouched at my feet, exclaiming:

"Speak, speak Arthur, anything is better than this stillness. Of what have you been thinking since you followed me into the green-room?"

"That you are the falsest of all false women."

"No, no," she cried, "one thing is genuine at least."

"What is it pray?"

"Arthur Bryant, as a danseuse I have been flattered and admired from my childhood; I have had many suitors, but I never knew what love was till I met you. My whole heart is yours, and I might have carried out my ruse till I had been your wife and it was too late for you to recede, but an irresistible impulse held me back. I would not even consent to the engagement, till I had put you to a test, and—you ought to give me the credit for being just in that at least."

"I do, but if you believe I, with my peculiar views, could ever marry a professional danseuse, you have overrated my love."

"Arthur, dear Arthur, let my devotion plead for me. I will leave the stage, and lead such a life that even you with all your prejudices, must respect me."

"No, no, Leoline," and I stole my heart against the pleading beauty of her face, which had now flushed crimson, while her dark eyes filled with hot tears, "my wife must be one whom all will respect."

"Is your love dead, Arthur?" she continued, with a shudder.

"It has been dying ever since I realized the painful truth that Dora Neal and the brilliant danseuse were the same. Good night; I hope we may never meet more for between us rolls a gulf which no love can span."

As I cast back a last glance at Leoline, I saw her lying on the floor, a forlorn and touching picture, her opera-cloak, and her white spangled robe, falling in crumpled masses about her, and her magnificent hair sweeping in dusky waves from her fairy crown. When I reached my hotel, I went to Dr. Richards' chamber, and had a long confidential talk with him, and afterwards wrote a lengthy letter to my friend. They kept my secret, and my only explanation to my sisters was, that "I had chanced to meet the danseuse at the seaside the previous summer, whither she had gone for her mother's health."

Before I left London, however, the voluble Frenchwoman, whom I had seen at the boarding-house where I had dined with the supposed Dora Neal, came to the hotel and desired a private interview with me. It appears that she had been a confidential servant of the danseuse, and had travelled with her from city to city, where her mother had engagements to fulfil. From her I learned that the pretended Mrs. Neal belonged to a good family, and had been disinherited for eloping with a French dancing-master, Victor La-blanche. She had then turned actress, and, from her childhood, her daughter had been trained as a danseuse.

"Madame," observed the woman, "has been ambitious to have mademoiselle make a brilliant match; and last spring, when she was dancing, she met her

cousin, Jules Videau, who is a student at your college, and then planned one little ruse to ensnare you, sir. Jules declared you had the strangest notions, and liked *timide, tranquille* girls, and said you would not go to Newport the next summer with your sisters, because you did not wish to meet what you called mere butterflies. Then Leoline begged to know where you were going, and he wrote her all the particulars from college."

"Was her mother's illness feigned?"

"No, no, no, sir! she had a cold, a hard cough that drove her from the stage, and mademoiselle was really anxious about her sometimes, but you may be sure Leoline made the most of these things."

"She wove a net into which I was fool enough to fall," I exclaimed, bitterly, "and yet when I told her how I scorned her arts she professed to love me."

"She did learn to love you, monsieur, and she told me when I again took my place as her waiting-maid, that her heart upbraided her the last night of her stay at the seaside, and I ventured to hint at a test which would be required of you by-and-by. When we had our quarrel, she begged me not to betray these secrets, and I believe she still hopes to win you back."

"That is absurd—as heaven hears me, I will never marry Leoline Lablanche!"

I then thanked her for her information and we parted.

CHAPTER III.

Five years rolled away, bringing many a change. I had, notwithstanding my infatuation, graduated with the highest honours of the university, and my proud old father's praise had thrilled me far more than the congratulations of the Dons, or the compliments of my friends.

Since then I had spent three years in study and travel, and on my twenty-fifth birthday, the steamer which bore home, swept grandly into Dover harbour. In that bitter hour when I first realized that I had made an idol to find it clay, I had declared I would never love, or trust woman more, and thus far I had kept my word.

The fair Hildegardes of Germany, the dark-eyed beauties of Rome, Florence, Genoa, and Naples, the bewildering Spanish girls, and the brilliant belles of Paris, where I had again met the charming Leoline on the boards of the theatre, had alike failed to arouse more than a passing interest, and I think my gaudy father was not a little pleased that I had returned heart-free.

My sisters were both married, and the house seemed lonely enough with nobody but we two gentlemen and the servants.

On the day of my first visit to my Sister Helen, I regretted to hear the porter say that his mistress had gone out boating, and would not probably return till night.

"I am very sorry!" I observed. "I am Mrs. Hollister's only brother, and have been away these three years."

"Oh, sir," he replied, "my mistress will be more than sorry at her absence. Will you walk into the house and wait for her? There are books and pictures in the library, and perhaps you can manage to pass away the time till she comes back."

"First, I think I will go down to the shore, and see if I can signal the boats," said I, and I suited the action to the word, but no boat was in sight, and I returned to the house.

With obsequious courtesy, the porter conducted me into the drawing-room, and with brotherly interest I took a survey of the luxurious apartment, tried the piano, and sang a few bars of a favourite song ere I unclosed the library door.

These, sitting by a bay-window draped with crimson, I found a fairy—a royally beautiful woman, as I saw at a glance.

At sight of me she rose to her full height, and I will endeavour to sketch her just as she appeared at that moment. Her figure was about the medium height and the perfection of queenly grace, while her face was darkly beautiful as our dreams of the hours. I think there are a few women who can bear the severe simplicity of a travelling dress, but nothing I thought could have been more becoming than the long, full, grey merino robe with its trimming of black velvet, the flowing mantilla which matched it, and the neat collar and cuffs.

She had removed her grey silk hat and gloves, and these and a thick shawl lay at her side.

Her shining ebony hair dropped in broad bandeaux over her crimson cheek, and was gathered in a massive braid at the back of her head and fastened by a plain gold comb.

Who could she be? and in what an awkward predicament I was involving myself.

"Excuse me, madam," I exclaimed, with a bow I

felt must be as awkward as a schoolboy's; "I did not know how the library was occupied, and will retire."

"No, no, sir!" she said, with the perfect ease of a high-bred woman; "I am like yourself, a guest arrived in Mrs. Hollister's absence, and have been trying to while away the time by reading. From your strong resemblance to my new cousin, and the miniature she has shown me on a previous visit, I infer you are her brother."

"Yes, Arthur Bryant, at your service, and you—"

"I am Edith Huntington, and have come down from London to stay till the holidays are over."

We thus easily glided into conversation, and when, at the thoughtful porter's suggestion, refreshments were provided for us, we lunched together in the dining-room.

My sister's maid then took Miss Huntington to her chamber, and I sauntered out to meet Helen.

Of course I received a warm welcome, and praise enough to have made me vain, had it been from any save partial lips, but when I recounted the particulars of my meeting with Miss Edith, a deal of merriment ensued.

At dinner I again met Edith Huntington, and if I had thought her beautiful in her travelling garb, she was still more so now in her maize-coloured satin, with its falls of lace, and the yellow jessamine drooping from her heavy hair.

Upon close acquaintance I admired her more than any one I had ever met; you could broach no topic on which she could not converse; she was thoroughly accomplished, her wit was brilliant, and she had enjoyed the advantages of foreign travel. The whole family favoured my suit, and I returned formally engaged to the lady of my choice; we were to be married the following winter. The Hollisters were in ecstasies, my father approved, and I thought I was happy.

CHAPTER IV.

I was making preparations for my wedding when I was smitten down with a severe illness; the typhoid fever had that season assumed a most alarming type, and raged like an epidemic, and only my father, a hired nurse, and the servants, who were quite devoted to me, ministered to my wants.

Helen and my other sister were prostrated with the same disease, but though a telegram informed Edith of my illness, she did not fly to me as I had thought a betrothed wife would at the first thought of my danger.

My father was highly indignant, but he did not dare express his feelings, lest I should be troubled, and kept discreetly silent.

At length those long, weary days ended, the crisis passed favourably, and my father took me to a quiet village, where he had an old friend, the pastor of a country church.

His wife was dead, and their only surviving child was his hope and comfort.

I thought her face lovely as the cherubs, at which I had gazed in copies of the old masters' works, but when, tired and languid, I entered Mr. Lee's study, the fair vision I met was like the dawn of a new life.

The slight, agile form, the fair, blonde face with its deep, earnest, tender violet eyes, the softly-tinted cheek, the dewy lips, the pale gold hair rippling away from the low, white brow, and a more powerful fascination for me at first sight than the royally beautiful woman to whom I was engaged.

Weeks wore away, the fields had lost their pomp of golden grain, and the snow capped the far-off mountains with splendour, but to me everything wore the bloom of spring-time.

Thanks to Mary's gentle ministry, health and strength were restored, but I yet lingered at the parsonage, wrapped in a spell which I had no power to break. To me that girl was a new revelation of womanhood, she acted as her father's amanuensis, gave food to the hungry, and shed sunshine into many a darkened home. She was a Christian, more noble than Edith Huntington.

I had not been there long, ere I had learned to seek her views of human existence, and as my character became revolutionized under her sweet influence, I wrote to my betrothed, courteously begging a release from my engagement.

I was anxiously awaiting a reply, when I was summoned on what my father called imperative business, and found Miss Huntington had arrived.

I hastened to my sister's town residence, and met the royal Edith in the boudoir, where she was awaiting me alone.

When greetings had been exchanged, she said, earnestly:

"Arthur, I do not understand your letter."

"It is perfectly plain, Edith. I ask a release."

"Ah, you are angry because I did not come to you when you were ill, but I can explain it—my mother needed my care and forbade my coming."

"I accept your apology, but believe me, I was not in love when I proposed to you. I now know and regret my precipitancy, for I love another."

"You are free then; but believe me, I shall not wear the willow for you, or any man in the wide world—I do not believe in broken hearts."

And with a forced laugh she swept from the room.

As for me, I went to my father and told him all, and in a husky tone he bade me win Mary Lee if possible.

I had felt some jealous pangs at the frequent visits of a young man who had been his colleague, and to whom rumour declared she was engaged.

Springing from the stage-coach which had borne me from London, I hurried along the narrow path leading to the parsonage, and there whom should I meet but young Mr. Gray and Mary.

A soft flush swept over her face as she saw me, and exclaiming:

"Mary, I am answered, I need no stronger proof," he resigned his charge to me.

For a time we walked on in silence, but at length I said:

"I may as well confess it, I am painfully jealous of that man. He has been making love to you."

"I will not deny it, Mr. Bryant."

"Mr. Bryant!" I cried. "Mr. Bryant, indeed. I should think I had been beneath your roof long enough, and you were sufficiently acquainted to call me Arthur. It pains me to have you so formal—you of all persons in the world, Mary Lee."

"Well then, Arthur, if you like it better—I would not willingly pain you."

"And now may I ask another favour?"

"Most assuredly."

"You have acknowledged that that young minister has been making love to you?"

"Yes, I was about to give him my answer just as you came up," and once more her face crimsoned.

"And can you give him anything more than a friend's regard?"

"No, and it is hard to reject an honest love."

"Mary, dear Mary, sit down here with me, I have much to say to you," and I drew her to a seat under a great beech-tree, and poured forth the story of my love.

When I paused for a reply, she leaned towards me, and murmured:

"When you came here, my father warned me to guard my heart, for you were a man of the world, and engaged to another, and I tried to obey. But since you are honourably free, I will confess that you have grown daily more and more dear to me, and it was my love for you, which told me I felt only esteem for Holmes Gray."

"Did he suspect it, dearest?"

"Yes, at sight of you, I know the blood rose to my very temples, and he saw it and said:

"Mary, I am answered!"

I was too happy then for words, and when we stole into the study, and received the old pastor's blessing, I would not have exchanged places with any man in the universe.

Edith Huntington astonished all our friends by accepting a man whose only recommendation was his wealth, and queens it royally in his splendid town residence, and palace-like country seat.

For eight years, Mary has been my wife, and to our little girl I can give no better example of what a true woman should be, than her mother, the light of my heart and home.

C. F. G.

THE associated companies are laying the metals on the line in the neighbourhood of Camborne, for the extension of the broad gauge on the West Cornwall Railway, with all possible despatch. It is said the broad gauge system will be completed from Truro to Penzance by the end of March.

We understand that the Admiralty have refused to adopt the Woolwich system of rifling, and have had all the naval guns of 7-inch bore rifled with an oven twist. Ten of the 12½-ton guns of 9-inch bore have been rifled on the gaining twist plan, but the Admiralty declined to have them, and the Duke of Somerset is so disinclined to trust the Ordnance Select Committee that he has ordered fifty heavy Whitworth guns (which the Ordnance Select Committee so strongly opposed) for immediate use on board ship.

RAILWAYS ON HAMPSHIRE HEATH.—Two railway companies have entered the field to invade Hampshire Heath. Mr. Bazalgette, the engineer, in a report made to the Metropolitan Board of Works, states that the North Metropolitan Railway proposes to make an open cutting through the heath at a depth of fifty-four to fifty-six feet below the surface, thus curtailing its area and covering it from Parliament Hill for about three-quarters of a mile. The Metropolitan and St. John's

Wood Railway Extension to Finchley is also proposed to cross the heath for a length of about three-quarters of a mile, partly on an embankment partly in cutting, and for about 250 yards in tunnel, which will also materially curtail the area of the heath and interfere with the access from one part to another of this much-frequented spot.

WATAWA.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE voyage of Scalp-Robe and his sister up the river was gloomy and silent.

The chief could not think of a certain and speedy way of again taking Bessie captive, nor could Eolah throw any light upon the mental darkness in which his defeat had left him.

Scarcely a word passed between them, therefore, until they had reached a bold and rocky point about two miles above the cataract, and then Watawa said:

"After what has passed, the pipe of peace must be buried. Linconah knows what he has to expect from the Great Eagle. The settlement must be burned, and the pale-faces destroyed. Let the work be well done, and then, when the White Fawn is found, Watawa and Eolah can retreat to the great woods."

"The pale-faces are many," sighed Eolah. "It would have been better to live in peace with them, or to have gone to the great woods in silence. As my brother has said, Linconah is mighty."

The chief scowled, and a look of stern resolve settled on his features.

"Before another noon," he said, "the power of Linconah shall be ended. The Great Eagle has spoken."

He propelled his canoe ashore on the point, springing out briskly, and his movements were imitated by Eolah.

Lifting the canoes from the water, the chief concealed them, one after the other, amid the bushes and trees covering the shore, and then looked long and searchingly around in every direction, to see if his movements had been observed by any of the settlers.

"The pale-faces are not here," he said, turning away. "Linconah came alone."

He struck into the woods, followed by his sister, and the couple soon emerged into a path, barely perceptible, that led away from the river, running nearly at right angles with it, and gradually mounting toward a range of hills, the tops of which were occasionally visible in the distance through openings in the forest.

Proceeding nearly a mile in this direction, they reached the foot of a ledge, climbed its precipitous side, and found themselves on the edge of a plateau which was covered by an Indian encampment or village.

The site had been well chosen, it forming a point from which to look to a great distance, and offered every facility for defence.

The lodges, some twenty-five or thirty in number, were ranged in two rows in the open centre of the plateau, and the majority of them were well-built and substantial, showing that they had occupied the same ground during the summer.

In these lodges, or in the spaces between them, a score of Indian women were engaged in their customary domestic drudgery, preparing food, making garments of skins, or, in some instances, gossiping idly with one another.

Playing here and there in the midst of the groups of women, could have been seen thirty or forty young savages, male and female, ranging from babyhood to manhood.

The principal feature of the village, however, was a stately grove at one end of the plateau, where, crouched upon the ground, and smoking gravely, were collected forty or fifty warriors, all armed, painted, and be-feathered, in the full costume of the war-path.

Here and there, at several points of the encampment, might have been seen a savage on the look-out, and the whole aspect of the scene was animated, and what could have been expected under the hostile circumstances of the moment.

The coming of the chief produced a marked sensation among the women and children, but not a sign escaped any of the solemn-looking braves, to show that they were conscious of the return of their leader.

"Before the sun is over our heads," said Scalp-Robe to Eolah, as he paused in front of one of the lodges, "the women and the children must go to the Eagle's nest."

"The camp, then, is to be broken up?"

"Yes. This place was chosen for peace, and not for war. The pale-faces can climb the rocks too quickly. Let all be put in order. Be ready."

Addressing himself to the squaws ranged constantly along the lines of the lodges, the chief ordered them to prepare everything at once for removal to the Eagle's nest, the mountain the most inaccessible to be found within a day's journey.

In a moment the whole encampment was a scene of bustle and confusion.

With the promptness of a trained regiment of engineers, the squaws tore their lodges to pieces, packed up such of the poles and other materials as they desired to save, and thereafter set fire to the heaps of leaves and other rubbish accumulated in them since their erection.

Pausing at his own lodge long enough to re-touch his damaged paint, and give some directions to Eolah about his personal effects, the chief was about to proceed to the assembly of his braves, when a lithe, and keen-eyed Indian, evidently not more than twenty years old, sped up the path which had so lately served the brother and sister, and came to a halt, pausing and perspiring, in front of his leader.

"Well, Deerfoot," demanded Watawa, "what words do you bring?"

"Words that will make gladness in the heart of the Great Eagle," answered the spy, "and be sweet to his ears as the murmur of the laughing waters."

"Speak, Deerfoot!"

"The brothers of Linconah are coming from the east," continued the spy, who had been about twenty-four hours.

"Coming? Where?"

"To the lodges of their people. The new brothers have as many waggons as Deerfoot has fingers on his right hand, and they have horses and cattle."

"Ah! another addition to our enemies!" said Scalp-Robe, with bitter emphasis. "Did not the Great Eagle say truly? The pale-faces are becoming as thick as the leaves in the woods, and there will soon be no room on the ground for us. Speak, Deerfoot, where have you seen these pale-faces?"

"In the rock-crevasse."

The spy referred to a noted run or gap in the hills, about a dozen or fifteen miles to the eastward of the settlement.

"They were there all night, Deerfoot?"

The spy assented.

"And they are now moving toward the lodges of Linconah?"

The spy again nodded.

The chief glanced at the sun, and a savage glow overspread his features.

"Five waggons?" he ejaculated, reflectively.

"The distance is far, and the feet of the pale-faces slow. There is time for the braves to teach these dogs of pale-faces that the warriors of Watawa are mighty."

He questioned the spy more particularly, and learned the number of the emigrants, their arms, their possessions, and everything necessary to his purpose.

"The words of Deerfoot have made the Great Eagle glad," he then said. "Deerfoot has wise eyes, and shall be spoken of in the councils of his people."

The spy was then dismissed to his lodge, or to the spot where it had lately stood, to get something to eat, and the chief turned to Eolah, who had listened to the spy's report, and said:

"Speak, sister! What does Eolah think of the words of Deerfoot?"

"The words of Deerfoot are pleasant. The young squaws who are coming to the lodges of Linconah have pretty things that the Great Eagle will fling to Eolah."

The brow of the chief cleared, and his eyes glanced jubilantly.

"There is time," he said. "The braves can make the journey of the pale-faces long, and they will not reach the lodges of Linconah until the sun has gone behind the forest."

Eolah drew nearer to her brother, for she saw by his pliant manner that he had formed a hopeful project.

"The sun will be gone," she said, suggestively, as the chief paused thoughtfully.

"And the darkness will be around the waggons before they reach the lodges of Linconah," continued the chief, breathlessly.

"And then—"

"Watawa has a robe he took from the body of a pale-face, and in that he will hide his face and creep into one of the waggons, and be carried among the lodges of Linconah."

The dusky face of the Indian girl became radiant with pleasure.

She saw at a glance how easy and simple was the chief's project—that he would detain the wagon-train *en route* until after nightfall, and then creep into one of the vehicles and ride unobserved into the settlement.

"The Great Eagle is wise," she declared, with hearty admiration. "And when Watawa is among the lodges of Linconah, he will seize the White Fawn."

"As the wolf seizes a dying deer," declared Scalp-Robe, with an emphatic gesture. "The eyes of Linconah are bright, but they will not follow Watawa in the darkness."

This scheme removed all traces of their late gloom from the faces of the two, and they rejoiced heartily. The sinister opportunity demanded by the chief seemed to be promised to him.

At this moment the savages who had been sent to the island to seize Lincoln, returned with their dismal report, bearing their dead companion as a confirmation of the defeat they had suffered.

The chief listened to their startling description of the feats of Linconah with a silent rage that appalled them more than his fiercest outburst of passion.

"Go, fools!" he commanded, scornfully, when they had finished. "Know ye not that Linconah can creep all day like a turtle at the bottom of the river? Dead Eye should have hidden his braves on the island, and shot Linconah when he was not looking. If Linconah sees the warriors he can dodge the bullets. Fools! the Great Eagle has spoken."

He moved his hand scornfully, with the air of a man who has solved the whole mystery of an occurrence, and the defeated braves slunk away into the midst of their fellows.

"Linconah is free, then," observed Eolah, "and the White Fawn is with him?"

"Yes; but Watawa will know where to find them," rejoined the chief, shaking off the gloom the defeat of his braves had cast upon him. "A bullet must be fired when Linconah is not looking. Watawa will take as many warriors as he has toes and fingers, and the rest of the braves must go to the Eagle's nest with the squaws and you."

Aided by his sister, he hastened the preparations of the squaws for their departure, and in half an hour only a few piles of smouldering embers remained on the site of the late encampment. War, cruel and unrelenting, was clearly the chief's purpose, and he was determined to wield his resources to his best advantage.

Proceeding to the midst of his assembled warriors, he chose the number he required for his expedition against the waggon train, and sent the rest away with the women and children.

A few moments more, and he was leading his band at a rapid pace toward the proposed scene of action.

CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER a pleasant row down the river, Robert Hale and Bessie Lincoln reached the settlement, attended by Socrates, and were received with an ovation which plainly showed Bessie's position in the hearts of the settlers.

The proceedings of the morning were duly reported, deepening the feeling of insecurity which had previously oppressed the inhabitants, and new measures of defence were at once entered upon, while the young couple proceeded to the Hale cottage.

On arriving at the dwelling, in company with Jenny, who had rushed forth to meet them, they and Socrates were welcomed by the blushing Clarissa, who had been prevented from accompanying Jenny by the fact that her toilet was at the moment in a state of transition between her ordinary attire and her elaborate pink calico.

She greeted Bessie with an exhibition of impulsive joy, and hastened to narrate the terrible danger she had herself incurred that morning when searching for strawberries outside of the palisades.

"You must have some of them berries, Bessie," she concluded. "I s'pose you're mortal hungry. Jest sit by, an' I'll give you something to eat in no time."

Bessie accepted the invitation, being really hungry, and Jenny speedily set before her a goodly supply of food, including a large dish of strawberries and cream.

Noticing that the ex-pedagogue cast longing glances toward the latter dainties, the spinster urged him to partake of her hospitality—on account of the troublesome times—and her invitation was finally accepted, after many hesitating glances at Robert Hale, who was devoting himself to Bessie's comfort.

After the repast, Bessie, Jenny, and Robert became engaged in conversation, while the spinster and Socrates withdrew to the steps to indulge at the same time in a communion of souls and watching the movements of the villagers.

It is needless to say that Robert was deeply interested in Jenny's friend, or that his heart quickened its beatings when he discovered that her cheeks flushed and her eyelids dropped under his glances. Jenny was delighted at the prospect of the fulfilment

of her dearest wishes, and under pretence of looking after household affairs, left the young couple to themselves for some time.

Robert at length was reminded that he was now a settler, and had a settler's duties to perform, and went out into the streets to talk with the principal men of the little community, and offer his aid if it should be required.

During his absence, the two maidens talked of him, and of Thomas Lincoln, and Bessie related her late adventures to her sympathizing friend. As the time progressed, they summoned Clarissa from her interesting occupation, and assisted her in preparing a tempting dinner, the odour of which more than reconciled Socrates to the spinster's absence.

At noon, the dinner-hour at Lincolnville, there was a general sounding of horns from cottage steps, and the villagers proceeded to their homes, Robert returning to find a chicken pot-pie smoking upon the family board. Socrates, who had also been wandering about, made his appearance and took his seat beside Clarissa, it being the custom in those primitive times for the servant to dine with the family.

After dinner, Robert went out again, and Jenny then proposed to take Bessie to Mr. Bugby's to view his twin prodigies, which proposition Bessie gladly accepted.

Donning sun-bonnets, they set out, leaving the spinster to entertain Socrates while attending to her household duties.

Mr. Bugby was not at home, but his wife, who looked very interesting with her young charge, gladly exhibited her babies, informing Bessie how they were named, at which information the maiden coloured strangely, as if anything that bore any reference to Robert Hale had peculiar interest for her.

The young girls discovered that Mrs. Bugby was entirely ignorant of the hostile attitude taken by the savages, her husband and nurse having agreed that the knowledge could only injure her, and that it had better be kept from her as long as possible. The maidens, therefore, were very careful to keep silent in regard to Bessie's recent captivity, but talked on all pleasant and cheerful subjects, admiring the picture presented by the young mother with her infants sleeping on a pillow beside her.

"Is there any news, girls?" she asked her visitors.

"Clarissa's got a beau at last," replied Jenny, merrily. "Robert's hired man seems to have taken a fancy to her."

"Mrs. Bugby echoed the girl's laughter, exclaiming:

"Do tell! Then poor Mr. Perkins 'll have a chance at last to get and come when he likes, without hindrance. Clarissa has well-nigh pestered his life out. I never saw a woman so bewitched to get married as Clarissa. And her paint, and false curls, and pink calico gown—it's enough to make a cat laugh to think of her little arts and wiles!"

Bessie and Jenny assented, and described Socrates in such a manner as to cause Mrs. Bugby to laugh so very merrily that one of the babies opened his eyes in a sort of wondering surprise—at least, the fond mother so interpreted the movement—and the nurse, a kind neighbour, vainly attempted to frown at the visitors.

At the earnest solicitation of the blacksmith's wife, the maidens remained with her until nearly sunset, and then took their departure.

At the little garden gate they encountered Mr. Bugby, who had come home to look after his wife, and Jenny asked:

"Is the waggon-train in sight yet, Mr. Bugby?"

"Not yet," was the reply. "We expect it every moment, though. So you've been in to see Mrs. Bugby? I hope she don't s'pect anything about the red-skins?"

"Oh, no," replied Bessie. "We were very careful not to allude to the hostilities, lest we should alarm her. She is very happy with the babies beside her."

The blacksmith's features worked with emotion for a moment, and he said, huskily:

"I pray to God that she mayn't know any more about the Indians than she does now. And them little fellows! If anything should happen to 'em—But there won't," he added, resolutely. "I could fight like a demon to save my wife an' them chill'ern from the savages."

The girls were touched at the honest blacksmith's energetic manner and moist eyes, and expressed their belief that the present hostilities were only a temporary outbreak that would soon be quelled or ended by a treaty.

Although his fears and his judgment suggested that the girls' hopes were unauthorized by appearances, Mr. Bugby caught at the straw presented, and assumed a more cheerful demeanour.

After a few minutes' further conversation with the maidens, he called up a snake to his pale lips in order

to disguise his anxiety and conceal his disquietude from his wife, and hastened into her presence.

Arm-in-arm, Bessie and Jenny proceeded down the street, noticing with some amusement that Socrates and Miss Clarissa were promenading everywhere in love-like manner, the spinster evidently bent upon exhibiting her conquest to all the villagers.

Near the block-house the maidens encountered Robert Hale, who was engaged in seeming anxious consultation with Parson Peabody and Deacon Springer.

At the approach of the girls, the two separated, and Robert hastened toward his sister and her friend.

There was a shade of anxiety upon his features which the maidens did not fail to notice, but he did not give them time to remark upon it, offering each an arm, and saying, with a smile:

"It's almost sunset, young ladies—ah! quite so. Suppose we go to the top of the block-house and see if the waggon train is within sight. Wouldn't you like to introduce me to the interior of the block-house, Miss Bessie?"

Bessie assented, but Jenny exclaimed:

"You must excuse me from attending you, for I want to run in and see Hetty Springer a minute about our new singing books. If you should see the waggon-train, just wave your handkerchiefs and I'll join you."

There was a merry sparkle in Jenny's eyes as she demurely turned her steps in the direction of Deacon Springer's cottage, inwardly admiring her little artifice to leave her brother and friend to themselves.

Neither Robert nor Bessie, however, suspected her ruse, and the latter expressed regret that her friend should have left them, wondering in her innocent soul that this regret was not echoed by Jenny's brother.

There were men at work in the lower floor of the block-house, stowing away provisions to be used in case of a siege, but passing them Robert and Bessie proceeded up a flight of stone stairs to the topmost floor, and thence to the flat roof.

As Robert had said, it was sunset.

The scene presented by the glowing west, and the rich landscape varied with the winding river, the vast forests, and the cultivated fields near the pretty village, was very charming, and the young man expressed his delight in no measured terms.

"I am glad that you are so well pleased with the village," said Bessie, seating herself upon the heavy parapet. "I love it dearly—perhaps because father founded it—and its praise is dear to me."

Robert drew nearer to the fair speaker, with a look of admiration and interest on his features.

"The praises due to the village are equally merited by its fairest inhabitant," he said, in the feeling tones of conviction. "Permit me to say, Miss Bessie, that the letters of Jenny, as warmly as she extolled you to me, have failed to do you justice. I am as surprised as delighted to find such a friend in the new home I have chosen."

"I see you have learned the art of flattery, Mr. Hale," responded Bessie, with the rosy beams of delight pursuing one another over her features.

"It is the truth," declared Robert earnestly. "Perhaps I ought not to be so frank in the avowal of my sentiments, but Jenny has so long filled her letters about you, that really it seems to me that we have long been acquainted."

Bessie was evidently pleased at this avowal. To hide her confused blushes, she looked away towards the edge of the great forest, which, all the long afternoon, had cast its veil over the movements of her father and the friends with him.

"It is strange the waggons do not come," she murmured. "The whole afternoon is gone, and no sign of them."

"Their non-arrival is indeed a ground for anxiety," rejoined Robert; "but I continue to hope that all has gone well. The road is a mere track over hills and across ravines, the horses and cattle are tired, and there are many other circumstances, to say nothing of an attack by the savages, to account for the delay. Besides, if your father had been closely pressed, he would have sent a message by Thomas for assistance. You will remember that such was his purpose, in case of need."

Bessie assented, adding:

"But you looked so very grave when Jenny and I met you, Mr. Hale, and Parson Peabody, and Deacon Springer also looked anxious."

"True, Miss Bessie; but we had no cause for anxiety save what you know. I feel a conviction that all will come out right, and that our friends will soon return. I was pleased to see how cheerful you and Jenny were when you joined me."

"Our cheerfulness was chiefly owing to the trust and confidence we feel in my father's ability to protect us," replied Bessie. "We were not heedless of our danger or of the peril of our friends, Mr. Hale, but I think a cheerful face will encourage our de-

fenders far more than tears and repinings. We must encourage, not oppress them. And then, too, we have been taught to rely upon One who is all powerful and who is the protector of the weak and helpless."

She looked up reverently as she concluded, and Robert bestowed upon her a glance of admiration and tenderness.

At this moment Socrates partly ascended the stairs leading to the roof.

He was formidably armed, and behind him, at the foot of the stairs, stood Clarissa, in an attitude half of entreaty and half of admiration.

"No signs of our friends yet, I suppose, Mr. Hale?"

"None," replied Robert, with a smile at the consequential air of the ex-pedagogue.

"Then, it is highly probable," declared Miffin, "that we shall have to form an expedition to look for them, as is said by the French on such occasions, or to investigate the matter, as is writ in ancient tomes. Is it not likely that the aborigines, the Indians, the red-skins, as they are vulgarly termed, have surrounded our unfortunate friends, and perchance killed or scalped every one of 'em?"

"It is possible," replied Robert, with a smile, to reassure Bessie against the exaggerated expression of his servant. "We will wait an hour longer, however, and hope for the best."

Having made an effective exhibition of himself to the spinster, Socrates descended to the street with an air of contentment.

"Fear not, Clarissa," said the ex-pedagogue, looking down upon her patronizingly. "Where I am, there you will find safety. No Injun's tomahawk shall remove those curls from your youthful head."

Clarissa put her hands up to her false front, and murmured:

"How affecting! How kind you are, Mr. Miffin! I feel almost as if we were engaged—he, he!"

Socrates rested his rifle lightly on his left arm, and smiling benevolently upon his companion, continued to stride to and fro in the public square of Lincolnville, looking to the spinster like a ferocious minister of destruction.

From the roof of the block-house Robert and Bessie watched the movements of Socrates, commenting upon them and upon Miss Clarissa's evident appreciation of the ex-pedagogue, but the young couple were each too anxious to continue the amusement long, and turned their gaze to the eastward, in the hope of beholding some sign of the arrival of the waggon train.

At length, after a brief silence, the maiden exclaimed,

"I see a horseman coming at last! at last!"

Robert's glances followed the direction of her outstretched finger, and he soon declared that the horseman was alone, and perhaps a messenger for reinforcement.

Bessie almost at the same moment recognized the swiftly-advancing horseman as Thomas Lincoln, and she leaned over the parapet, waving her handkerchief to Jenny Hale, who was standing at Deacon Springer's gate, in company with a maiden of her own age.

"Let us go down to meet Thomas," said Bessie, eagerly, springing from her seat. "Oh, if anything should have happened to dear father—"

Appreciating her anxiety, Robert hastily conducted the maiden from the building into the street, meeting Jenny in the square below.

"Dear Jenny," exclaimed Bessie, appreciating her friend's unspoken and ill-concealed anxiety for her lover, "Thomas is safe! He is coming. Let us hasten to the palisade to meet him."

By the sudden pallor that overspread Jenny's face, Bessie comprehended the suspense her friend had endured on account of Thomas, and she pressed her hand in earnest, sisterly affection.

Accompanied by Robert, and followed by the entire Springer family, the anxious Mr. Bugby, Parson Peabody, and his aged helpmeet, and the whole population of Lincolnville, the maidens proceeded toward the palisades, arriving at the gate just as it gave admittance to Thomas Lincoln.

The messenger's horse was in a foam, and the messenger himself looked breathless and exhausted, as if he had ridden at the utmost speed. As he drew rein, Bessie sprang forward from Robert's gentle grasp, reached her brother's side, exclaiming,

"Oh, Thomas—father? Is he safe?"

"Yea, he's all right," replied her brother.

"Nobody skilled!"

This declaration was greeted with a cheer, and Thomas glanced over the faces encircling him as if baying to behold one nearer and dearer than all the rest. As a disappointed look mantled his face, a gentle hand stole into his, and the voice he loved best whispered,

"Oh, Thomas, thank God, you are saved! I have been so anxious about you to-day, darling!"

A flush of joy overspread Thomas's face, and he caught the hand in a close clasp, looking down into Jenny Hale's tearful eyes with a gaze of answering love, and he replied, in an equally low tone:

"Bless you for your love and the sweet name you have called me, Jenny! We understand each other at last, my own darling!"

Jenny regarded her lover in blissful content, and, although he was not less joyous and delighted at their sudden betrothal, he did not lose sight of his errand home, but, lifting his gaze, exclaimed loudly:

"The waggon train is rapidly approaching the village, friends. We have been harassed by the red-skins to-day, but not one of our friends has been killed, although several have been wounded. Suppers are needed for the new-comers, and arrangements must be made to lodge and care for the wounded."

"I can lodge two in my spare room," exclaimed Parson Peabody, eagerly.

"And we can feed as many as is necessary," added his equally hospitable wife.

Deacon Springer and others came forward to offer their houses and larders, and after a little parley all proceeded to their cottages, from whose broad chimneys soon issued volumes of smoke, indicating the preparations being made within.

Thomas Lincoln was taken to the Hale cottage in triumph, his cortège consisting of his faithful Jenny; of Bessie and Robert, who, arm in arm, seemed sharing their joy; of Socrates and Clarissa, both of whom related their adventures at the hands of the Indians, Clarissa having firmly persuaded herself that when gathering her pail of straw-berries she had been an unconscious heroine; and, finally, of the juvenile population of Lincolnville, upon whom Thomas's sudden and hurried arrival had made a profound impression.

Arrived at the cottage, the fire, which was already in good order for the usual tea-making, was replenished, great dry logs being heaped upon it, and the maidens Clarissa and Socrates set about preparing a bounteous repast for the new settlers, Robert and Thomas assisting the operations.

The dining-table was made large enough by the addition of a pine ironing-table, the snowy home-made linen cloth concealing both, and covers were laid for a dozen.

Robert brought up from the cellar a quantity of venison steaks and some ham, which were speedily cooking over the fire; Bessie brought from the pantry loaves of nice white bread and pots of butter; Jenny proceeded to manufacture a "corn dodger" of great dimensions; Miss Clarissa hulled the remainder of the strawberries and supplied the eaters of the repast; and Socrates devoted his attention to the roasting of a large supply of potatoes in the hot ashes.

While the viands still steamed over the fire, giving forth tempting odours, a great shout from the juvenile population announced the arrival of the waggon train, and, leaving Clarissa and Socrates in charge, the maidens and their brothers hastened into the street to meet their friends.

The larger portion of the villagers joined them, enough only remaining at home to look after the dinners in progress, but before all had reached the gate, the settlers, headed by Mr. Lincoln, had gained admittance.

They were greeted with prolonged shouts, and after everybody had shaken hands with the scout—even the boys in petticoats claiming recognition from the great man of Lincolnville—Mr. Houseman and his companions were introduced to the villagers in general, and to the parson, the deacon, the blacksmith, etc., in particular.

"Come home with me, Mr. Lincoln," cried the parson, catching the scout by the arm, lest some one should carry him off before his eyes. "My wife told me to be particular to bring Mr. Lincoln home with me. I shan't dare to face her if you refuse."

The parson's wife being proverbially meek and gentle, Mr. Peabody's last remark excited a storm of laughter.

"Come home with me, Mr. Lincoln," exclaimed Mr. Bugby, grasping the scout's other arm in both of his brawny hands. "Come and see my twins—the nicest little fellows! I'll set my wife right up if you'll come."

While the scout, with an amused smile stood between the rival claimants upon him, Bessie sprang forward, throwing her arms around his neck, and covering his rough face with tears and kisses.

"Oh, father, come to Jenny's with me," she said. "I want to see you so much. Oh, I am so glad you've got home safe!"

"Mr. Lincoln is going with me!—with me!—with me!" shouted a dozen voices in amicable dispute, while the scout greeted Jenny Hale and others, introducing to them the new-comers.

"My friends," exclaimed Mr. Lincoln, his eyes twinkling with amusement, yet his countenance showing that he was not unmindful nor ungrateful

for the affectionate demand in which he was held. "I should like to divide myself into a sufficient number of pieces to go home with each of you, but you see it would not be convenient for me to do so. Your demands make me think of a little story—but I won't tell it now, as our new friends are pretty tired."

"But you'll go home with me?" cried the parson, tightening his hold upon Mr. Lincoln's arm. "My wife, you know—"

"You'll go with me?" exclaimed Mr. Bugby, attempting to put the scout's arm in his own. "My twins—"

Bessie and Jenny looked pleadingly at the scout, who laughed as he said:

"Mr. Houseman and I will go home with Parson Peabody, it being our duty to shield him from his wife's wrath. After dinner, Mr. Bugby, we'll come in to look at the twins. And Jenny, Mr. Houseman, and I will take up our quarters at your house for the night. To-morrow I'll visit everybody in turn. Now help us in with the waggon, which may be grouped in the square, around the block-house."

The scout's decision was received with applause, and Parson Peabody sped homeward to assist his wife in preparing for the distinguished guests, while the remainder of the villagers assisted in driving the cattle and waggons to the square.

The cattle were then removed to hospitable barns, and liberally fed by the Lincolnville youths, while their elders made the better acquaintance of the new-comers, and carried them off to their several cottages to dinner.

The weary matrons who had arrived in the waggon-train met with hearty sympathy and encouragement from the women of Lincolnville, Mrs. Springer, Mrs. Peabody, and others, treating them like sisters.

Hetty Springer took home with her a bevy of young girls, and the Springer boys led away in triumph half-a-dozen tired urchins.

Mr. Perkins opened his house to young and old indiscriminately, and Jenny Hale and her brother received Bessie and Thomas Lincoln, of course, and two or three families, including parents and children, and a pleasant, much-petted and universally-demanded grandmother, whose broad, benevolent countenance suggested future stores of dough-nuts and bread-cake for her clamorous descendants.

The streets were now deserted, but the village presented a pleasant picture in the gathering gloom of the soft summer evening.

Every cottage gleamed with lights, and echoed with the music of laughter, every heart throwing aside its fears and feeling of anxiety on account of the Indian outbreak, and rejoicing in their augmented numbers, and consequently their increased security.

Most of the cottage doors were open, and through the portals could be seen the well-loaded tables surrounded by happy faces, on which the prominent expression was one of relief.

The fires gleamed brightly in the wide chimney-places, looking cheerful and homelike, although they were not needed except for cooking purposes.

The guards had been changed for the evening, and were vigilant on their posts, and the village never looked more peaceful and secure.

While the inhabitants were thus absorbed in the task of entertaining the new-comers, and the guards kept watch on every point outside the walls, a form crept stealthily from one of the waggons, keeping in the shadow of the block-house.

The sinister visitor was enveloped in a white man's cloak, but from the folds peeped forth a fringe of human hair that depended from an inner garment.

This intruder was Scalp-Robe!

(To be continued.)

THE captain of the emigrant ship Neptune is in custody at New York, charged with cruelty to his passengers and crew during their voyage from Liverpool to that port. Several affidavits, proving the horrible state of affairs during the voyage have been made.

LOUIS PHILIPPE'S SONS AT A MASKED BALL.—I witnessed a strange sight at one of the masked balls at the opera in Paris. A young man of herculean strength had intruded himself among a party of dancers in a quadrille, and laid violent hands on a young lady already engaged. The gentleman of the party flew to the rescue, and for a few minutes all was confusion, but four or five of the secret police presently appeared on the scene, and arrested the cause of the disturbance. I was surprised to observe that none of the other persons engaged in the disturbance was molested, but allowed to dance as if nothing had occurred, and on quitting the ball I determined to unravel the secret. After some trouble I found that the party was composed of the sons of Louis Philippe and some of their friends, who were completely metamorphosed by the aid of false wigs, etc. On my

mentioning the "circumstances to a friend of mine, Count D—," he said that they often disguised themselves, and appeared thus in public; and that one day during the preceding summer, after dining with them at Chantilly, the Duke de Nemours proposed a stroll, and taking out of his pocket his false wig and whiskers, said: "You, sir, have no occasion to disguise yourself; but as it fell to my lot to be the son of a king, I am obliged to have recourse to disguise and strategy from morning till night."—*Captain Gronow's Last Recollections.*

THE BOHEMIAN.

CHAPTER XVII.

It was not until midnight that the strange sounds of confusion died away, and when comparative quiet was restored, Paul and Maurice laid themselves down upon a bundle of damp straw, and were soon asleep. They awoke at the first beams of morning were struggling through the narrow loophole, and after a time spent in conversation upon things past, Paul proposed that they should bow in prayer.

"We shall have the benefit of no priest," he said; "and if we would commend our spirits to God, we must do it ourselves."

"And I cannot see why it will not answer every purpose," returned Maurice, with philosophical coolness. "I believe an honest, sincere heart is acceptable in its devotion to God at all times; we need not fear that our prayers will be unheard. You can pray, and I will give my whole heart and soul up to the influence."

"It is our last prayer, Maurice."

"Yes, our last. Let us kneel on the straw."

"Hark!" cried the valet, bending his ear towards the door. "Juste ciel! we are too late!"

Paul had time to clasp his hands and murmur a few words of prayer, when the heavy bolts were withdrawn, and the door swung open.

"Hail!" spoke a stout, broad-shouldered man in a ragged blouse and tattered shirt, as he turned the bright side of a lantern into the cell, "is Paul de Courcy here?"

"I am here, sir," replied the youth.

"And Maurice Casabon?"

"I am here, too."

"Do you like your quarters well enough to remain here?"

"Don't trifle with us, sir," said Paul, with a touch of indignation in his tone.

"Do you think I would trifle with men who are condemned to die?"

"Grand Dieu!" exclaimed Maurice, whose eyes were just beginning to use themselves to the strong light.

"It is Dion St. Martory, the blacksmith."

"Right, my brother. I am the man."

"I did not think," pursued the valet, slowly shaking his head, "that St. Martory could have come to this."

"Come to what?"

"To act as the tool of Gabriel Dracon."

"Ah! you should have seen me last night, Maurice Casabon, you should have seen me in the seat of the president of the court. You should have heard me pass sentence upon Gabriel Dracon; you should have seen him cower and tremble and turn pale; and you should have heard him beg and pray for mercy then; for no woman ever showed herself such a coward. But that isn't all. You should have heard the people shout for joy when they saw the knife of the guillotine come down, and Gabriel Dracon's head roll off upon the ground. They shouted as they had shouted a few hours before, when they received the news of the death of Robespierre."

Paul de Courcy started forward and laid his hand upon the blacksmith's arm.

"In the name of heaven what is all this? Robespierre dead?"

"Yes, Master Paul. He died upon the guillotine."

"And Gabriel Dracon dead?"

"It is as I have told you. And one thing more is dead. The guillotine of Chatillon has been burned, and its ashes now cover the spot which was but yesterday red with blood."

"But the people, how is it with them?" asked our hero, not yet daring to speak of himself.

"Sacre bleu! You never saw such a thing. Those who yesterday would have kissed the guillotine, last night tore it down. There will be no more executions in Chatillon except for crimes of the worst-kind. And now, if you will come with me to the court we will soon have your sentence reversed, and then you may go at liberty."

Paul de Courcy staggered back against the wall, completely overcome by this startling intelligence.

But in a little time he revived, and when his shackles had been stricken off, he took the arm of Maurice, and followed St. Martory from the prison.

But he was not permitted to walk through the hall. The street was filled with people, who, when they saw the youthful prisoner upon the piazza, rushed towards him with wild shouts; and before he could offer resistance or remonstrance, he was lifted upon the shoulders of half a dozen stout men, and borne along through the dense throng.

At the court he and Maurice were called up together, and the sentence which had been passed against them was not only revoked, but the page whereon the sentence had been recorded was torn from the book and destroyed.

It was not until near noon that Paul and Maurice got clear of the multitude, and as soon as possible thereafter they made their way to the villa, where they found the property about as they had left it three months before, and some of the old servants still in charge.

Old Baptiste, the gardener and porter, was there, and he fairly wept tears of joy when he knew that his young master was safe.

"But how happened it that the Jacobins had not seized upon the estate?"

"Ah," answered Baptiste, "there's something strange about that. Both this villa and the Chateau of St. Hubert have been allowed to remain unmolested."

"It is plain enough to me," said Maurice. "Gabriel Dracon and Gaspard Coppin were keeping them for their own use. They forgot that a power like theirs could not long endure, and they probably fancied that when their rule was fixed they might settle down in comfortable homes, and ape the aristocrats they had helped to destroy."

Maurice was evidently right.

The rest of the day Paul spent in arranging matters, so that the servants might know what to do, and on the following morning he went over to the chateau. The people there had already been informed of what had transpired in the town, so that those who had, through fear, joined with the Jacobins, were ready to enter into arrangements for managing affairs until the return of their master.

It required several days to put things into proper shape on the two estates, and when this had been done, Paul returned to town to assure himself concerning the disposition of the populace, for he wished to know what trust was to be reposed in the sudden transition.

"You need have no fears," said Dion St. Martory. "Another courier came from Paris yesterday, and though the Convention still rules in France, yet the season of wholesale slaughter is passed. The members of the Convention united for their common safety against Robespierre, for they had found that while the guillotine was kept so busy, even they themselves were not safe. Those few provinces that openly resist the present government will undoubtedly be visited with heavy punishment, but only unmistakable opposition will hereafter constitute recognized crime. Your father and the Marquis St. Hubert may return to Chatillon in perfect safety, and I know I hazard nothing in saying that they will be received with warm welcome by the people. *Parbleu!* just look at it. Where are those who, one short week ago, filled the great square at this hour of the day? They are at their homes and workshops. Even that tigress incarnate, Madame Buchard, says she is glad she can now help her husband in his wine-shop. The transition is complete. The people have had enough of blood."

"What of Gaspard Coppin?" asked Paul. "Can you tell me where he is?"

"No," replied Dion; "but I do not think he will venture to show himself again in Chatillon. He has made too many enemies here."

"Could he possibly have any authority should he choose to return?"

"*Morbleu!* no. He might, were he not careful, follow the fate of Gabriel Dracon."

With this information Paul returned to the villa, and on the following morning he and Maurice set out for Switzerland. They reached Bern without difficulty, but they found the old house shut, and the doors locked, and upon making inquiries at M. Waldern's, our hero learned that his father had left the city.

"He went away," said the old gentleman, "on the very next day after your disappearance, and from what I have since learned, I am satisfied that he had met some enemy of whom he stood much in fear."

"You are right," returned Paul. "He must have seen the same villain who entrapped me. But have you no clue to his whereabouts?"

"None at all. I only know that he went towards the north."

Paul made further inquiries of those whom his father had been in the habit of visiting, but none of them could give him any information.

"What now?" asked Maurice.

"Ay—what now?" echoed Paul.

"We must search," was the valet's reply.

"But where?"

"Towards Germany. We can inquire as we go. At all events we shall gain nothing by remaining here."

"It cannot be possible," said Paul, that Coppin has."

"Pshaw!" cried Maurice, who comprehended the drift of his young master's query. "You need have no fears in that direction. It is not the villain's policy to harm your father in person. If Coppin could have his way he would conduct Leopold de Courcy in safety to Chatillon. I do not understand the nature of his power over your father, but I do understand that he has some strong hold upon him. However, that is nothing to us now. Let us be off as soon as possible and commence our search."

Early on the next day they started, and towards night, at a small hamlet not far from Burgdorf, they found that a man answering to the description given of Sir Leopold exchanged horses there, between three and four weeks before, and that he had taken the road thence towards Longenthal.

Our adventurers pursued the course designated; but they were ere long satisfied that they had lost the right track.

Three weary weeks they continued the search; and at length, as they sat one evening upon the piazza of a small inn, at Stuttgart, Maurice proposed that they should return to Chatillon.

"I will make up my mind to-morrow," said Paul. Arnaud St. Hubert has friends in this place, and I would first learn concerning him."

On the next day our hero learned that the marquis had returned to France—that he had been gone over a week—and when the morning of another day had dawned he was prepared to follow.

It was not impossible that his father had heard of the downfall of Robespierre, and had gone back to his own home.

"At any rate," said Maurice, "we shall only waste time and money by continuing our search. If your father has not yet returned he will certainly do so as soon as he learns of the change that has taken place, and that he must learn soon—if he has not already been informed—for the intelligence of Robespierre's death must run like wildfire through Europe."

Once more towards France.

A cool, refreshing September day was just drawing to a close, when Paul and his companion drew up at the villa; and the first person who came to greet them was Leopold de Courcy.

He embraced his son with passionate warmth, and when they were seated within doors, he told how he had reached home.

He had been at home nearly two weeks before he heard of the wondrous change in political matters, while in Schaffhausen.

"I searched for you everywhere, father. I gained positive information of you several times, but the track was lost almost as soon as found."

"I do not wonder you failed to find me, my son, for every step I took was intended to blind any one who might follow me. You know why I fled from Bern?"

"I can guess."

"And of course you will guess correctly. I fled to escape the very man who took you away. I saw him in the street after you were gone, and I knew he had his eye upon me. And now tell me—have you seen anything of him since you were set free from prison this last time?"

"No," replied Paul.

"Did you hear anything of him while you were searching for me?"

"No. I do not think he followed you at all."

The young man was evidently about to ask something concerning Gaspard Coppin, when his father put forth his hand to stop him.

"We will say nothing more about that man to-night, Paul. He may be dead. Ah, if I could have the assurance—"

The knight did not finish the sentence, for he found himself betraying too much.

He arose from his seat, and very soon he was happily relieved by one of the servants coming in and calling the young man to supper.

After supper Paul found that his father had gone out, and without more delay he crossed the river, and made his way to the chateau, where he received a warm welcome from the marquis, and where he once more held Cora to his bosom.

The evening was calm and inviting, and the lovers walked out into the garden.

"Thus once again, my life!" said Paul, as he imparted a kiss upon Cora's warm cheek. "Has not the morning of a brighter day dawned upon us?"

"Yes, Paul."

"And will we not make the most of the opportunity—will we not take upon ourselves the sacred relation that is to make us one for evermore?"

"I am all your own, Paul."
"How you tremble, Cora! What is it? Surely there is no cloud that has not been blown away!"

"Dear Paul," spoke the maiden, stopping, and gazing up into her lover's face, "what will your father say to our union?"

"He will not object."
The youth did not speak with perfect assurance.

"If he consents," continued Cora, "all is well. But my father fears that he will refuse."
"Refuse!" echoed Paul. "By my soul, he cannot. I will speak with him this very night. To tell you the truth, Cora, I have never spoken freely with my father upon the subject, but I will no longer delay. However, we need borrow no trouble on that score. He cannot refuse me."

"I hope he will not." Oh, my own Paul, I should be very miserable!

"Don't talk so, Cora. Why, what think you can stand between you and me?"

And our hero drew his lovely companion away from the subject which was beginning to make him uneasy, and led her to tell him of what she had seen and what she had done in Germany.

She had much to tell, and he had much to tell, and it was so late when they returned to the chateau, that Paul bade her good night without going in.

Upon reaching the villa, Paul found his father pacing up and down the piazza.

The moon had arisen, full and bright, shedding a light almost like noonday upon the dewy sward, and by the silvery beams the youth could see that Sir Leopold wore a troubled, anxious look.

"Ah, Paul, is this you?"

"Yes, father."

"I thought you had retired."

"No, I have been over to the chateau."

"You have seen the marquis?"

"Yes."

"And you have seen Cora?"

"Yes."

Leopold walked away to the far end of the piazza, and when he came back he laid his hand upon his son's shoulder.

He was very pale, and his whole frame trembled.

"Paul, we have both been wrong in this matter. You should have spoken with me, and I am free to acknowledge that I ought to have spoken with you. But I trust that you have not yet—"

At that moment the sound of an approaching foot-step broke upon the air, and Leopold de Courcy started back.

"A man is coming to see me, Paul, and I must see him alone. Go in. I will speak with you in the morning."

Up from beneath the shadows of the great oaks came a tall, dark form; but it stopped as it reached the tree where the moonbeams fell upon the sward.

"I must see this man. Go in, my son—no questions now. If you have any respect for me, obey me in this."

Paul went in very reluctantly, for he imagined that he had discovered who the strange visitor was.

In the hall he met Maurice.

"Master Paul," said the valet, in a nervous, hurried tone, "do you know who has been here?"

"No. What mean you?"

"Two hours ago, while your father was out, a man called to see him, and left word that he would come again. Baptiste saw him, and says it was Gaspard Coppin."

"Grand Dieu!" cried the youth. "He is with my father now!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

PAUL DE COURCY was for a while like one stupefied. He walked to an open window that looked out upon a low balcony, and while he stood there he heard the hum of voices.

One of them was that of his father, and the other the deep, guttural voice of Gaspard Coppin. He could distinguish that one spoke in a praying, supplicating tone, and the other was bold and threatening; but he could not make out their words.

And that man, by some mysterious power, stood between him and Cora St. Hubert!

He was as sure of it as though his father had confessed it to him.

After listening some time longer, but in vain, to catch the words of the speakers, Paul returned to the hall, where the valet still stood.

"Maurice," he said, "Gaspard Coppin is with my father. Gaspard Coppin is my enemy. As sure as fate, he stands between me and Cora. I cannot tell why it is so, but I know that such is the case. In heaven's name, what can I do?"

"Let us lie in wait for him, and capture him, and carry him before the court; I believe St. Martory and his associates will make quick disposal of him!"

"You speak well, Maurice. We will take him as he goes away to-night. We will overpower him, and bind him, and carry him up in our boat."

"We must prepare at once, my master, for he may not remain much longer."

"Our preparations can be quickly made. We want our swords, and some good stout cords; and, as a matter of precaution, it might not be amiss to take pistols."

"I will be with you in a very few moments," said the valet. "Get your weapons, and I will bring the cord."

They separated, and in less than five minutes were again together, fully equipped for the adventure.

But Maurice had one more weapon than had been mentioned—a short, stout club, heavy enough to fell an ox.

"It's the only safe way," he said, as Paul asked what he would do with it. "Coppin is a perfect marvel of muscle, and I do not choose to run much risk. I have a faint recollection of having received a slight tap of the head from some sort of a weapon like this in the garden at Bern, and I should like to pay off the score."

"But, Maurice, you will kill the man if you are not careful."

"I will be very careful. *Parbleu!* such a head as his is not easy to be broken; but I will not kill him. Are we ready?"

They went out by the postern, and by a circuitous route reached the path down which Coppin would evidently come; and having selected a convenient shelter behind a clump of dwarf cherry trees, they sat down, and awaited the approach of their victim.

And they had not gained their cover a moment too soon, for while yet Maurice was calculating how he should make the attack, they heard the sound of foot-steps, and presently Gaspard Coppin came in sight, walking rather slowly, and talking with himself.

"*Diable!* he is like a child in my hands," Paul heard him say. "I can do with him as I please. I shall live once more. Oh, Sir Leopold, what would you give to know that Gaspard Coppin was six feet under ground!"

With teeth set, and every nerve strung, Maurice sprang from his cover, and dealt the dark villain a blow upon the top of the head that felled him to the earth like a log.

"*Mercy!*" cried Paul, to whom the blow had sounded like a deadly crash, "you have killed him."

"I struck harder than I meant," said the valet; "but I guess he is not dead. Let us move him out into the moonlight and see."

As the moonbeams fell upon the ashy face, Maurice shook his head dubiously.

"I fear I did strike too hard. Ha! didn't his eyes open then?"

"I think not," replied Paul.

"But there's motion in his pulse. Let us carry him to the river and bathe his head."

It was only a short distance from the water's edge, and when the body had been deposited upon the sand, Paul brought water in his hat; but before they commenced the valet suggested that it would be well to bind his legs.

"For," said he, "we don't want him to get up too suddenly."

Maurice had taken the cord from his pocket, and was in the act of stooping, when one of the coarse, heavy shoes came up with prodigious force, striking him under the chin, and knocking him back at full length.

In another moment the rasal was upon his feet, and, seemingly inclined not to be partial in his favours, he gave Paul a blow with his fist that sent him reeling some yards away, and then, with the speed of the wind, he darted off into the wood.

Paul came back just as Maurice was getting up, and for a few moments they regarded each other with looks anything but dignified.

"*Sacre bleu!*" muttered the valet, rubbing his chin.

"I knew he opened his eyes."

"There can be no use in giving chase," said Paul, dubiously.

"We might as well chase the wind. The villain runs like a bound."

And so, with few words but with much thinking, they returned to the villa, where, before they separated, they agreed that they would not speak of what had transpired.

Paul did not care that his father should know it, and Maurice had no desire that his fellow servants should know how completely he had been outwitted.

On the following day Paul received a summons to attend his father in the library.

He found his parent seated by a table, upon which were some folded papers, bearing fresh ink-marks upon their backs.

"Paul," said the knight, after his son had taken a

seat, "we commenced a conversation last night, and I have sent for you now that we may finish it."

He spoke like one who had made a powerful effort to control himself, so that outwardly he was unnaturally cold and stern.

"Do you know," he continued, "who it was that interrupted us?"

"It was Gaspard Coppin," replied Paul.

"You are right, my son; and here let me say that the visit of that man concerned you not in the least, so I must ask that his name may be dropped. You will obey me in this?"

Paul might have objected to that arrangement, had there not been a subject upon his mind of far more importance, and even as it was, he did not hold himself bound by his father's wish.

"When we were interrupted last night I was speaking of Cora St. Hubert. I think I was about to express the hope that you had not yet allowed your affections to become fixed upon her."

"In mercy's name!" cried the youth, "what sort of a man do you take me to be? Do you think that my heart is stone, and that my blood is frozen? Do you imagine that I have no soul—no spirit?"

"Hush, Paul! Don't give way to such a speech. We have need to be calm and reasonable now."

"Calm and reasonable?" echoed our hero, the blood rushing to his cheeks and temples.

"Calm and reasonable about what? You said we ought to have spoken upon this subject before. I have sought to speak with you many times, but the opportunity has never offered itself until now. You have turned from me and shunned me, as though you knew that I would speak of Cora St. Hubert, and as though you dreaded to hear me. If I have been silent upon one of the most important affairs of life, it has been because you were stern and repellent. But I will be silent no longer. I love Cora St. Hubert—love her with all the strength of my heart and soul, and she loves me as well. We have pledged our faith, and exchanged vows, and she will be my wife."

"Paul, Paul!" groaned the knight, his hands clasped and his pale lips quivering, "you know not what you do. This cannot be. You can never be the husband of Cora St. Hubert!"

The youth gazed into his father's face for some moments without speaking. At first he was fearfully agitated, but gradually his face assumed a stern, cold calmness, and he seemed to regard his parent almost as he might have regarded an enemy.

"Do you tell me that Cora St. Hubert cannot be my wife?" he asked.

"She must not be."

"Why not?"

"Do not ask me."

"Again I ask—Why cannot the daughter of St. Hubert be my wife?"

"In Heaven's name, Paul, let the question pass. I tell you the thing cannot be. That sacred union between the son of De Courcy and the daughter of St. Hubert would be a profane mockery! Put her image from your heart, and forget her."

Paul started to his feet, and stood close by his father's chair.

"Listen to me!" he exclaimed, in deep, measured tones, as though each word had been weighed and selected with understanding. "If you will give me your reason for this most strange and unnatural decision, I will give it respectful attention. If you do not give me your reason—if you leave me in the dark while such a mighty event is pending—I will pursue my own course, according to my own will, even though I am forced to renounce my home for ever!"

"Paul!—my son," pleaded the knight, in a wailing tone, at the same time raising his hands imploringly, "you know not what you say. Oh, my God! I hope you may never suffer what I am called to suffer! If I could speak, I would speak freely. If my life could save you, I would lay it down cheerfully. But my tongue is tied. Oh! heaven help me! Merciful God, sustain me!"

Leopold de Courcy bowed his head upon his hands, and sobbed and wept like a child. Paul could have borne anything else but this; but to see his father thus bowed down and crushed touched him deeply.

"Oh, my father, what is this terrible thing that lies between us? Why should you fear to trust me? Would you not feel better if you confided in me?"

"Not now, not now, Paul. Let us talk no more. Go and school your heart for a new walk in life. Cora cannot be your wife. Even her father will not consent. I am not well now, my son. Leave me."

Paul hesitated a few moments; but as his father remained with his head bowed, he finally left the library without speaking further. He went out into the park, and at the end of an hour, spent in torturing reflections, he crossed over to the chateau, determined to see the marquis.

He found St. Hubert alone, and without evasion or concealment of any important point, he related what had passed between himself and his father.

"And now," he continued, "must I give up my love? Oh, St. Hubert, you will not—"

"Hush, Paul," interrupted the marquis, in a soft, kind tone. "Do not ask of me that which I must refuse. Your father has spoken with me, and I know that he is opposed to this union."

"And why should he oppose it?" asked the youth. "In heaven's name what is the meaning of this strange opposition?"

"My dear boy, I am as much in the dark as you are. I cannot comprehend it. But, you will understand how I am situated. Without your father's consent of course I cannot think of allowing Cora to become your wife. You must not blame me."

"And is this the end of all my hopes?" cried Paul, with quivering lips. "Oh, would that the guillotine had done its work with my life!"

"Paul, you are foolish. Let not this blow prostrate you. You have youth and health and strength; and the life before you may be made a glorious one."

"No, no. Without the sun there can be no more day; and if Cora is lost to me there can be no more joy in life! But it shall not be. You will have mercy. My father has not treated me as he should have treated me. Why—why should Cora and I be separated? What have we done but love and promise? Shall the fiat of one who can give no reason for his course be allowed to crush for ever the hearts of—"

"Be still, Paul. We know not what reason he may have; but you are bound to respect his commands. I have no doubt that his reason is a good one."

"Arnaut St. Hubert," cried the youth, arising, and resting his hand upon the arm of the marquis, "you know more than you have told me!"

"Paul!"

"Ah, do not deny it. If you had not some clue to my father's secret, you would not so readily shut your heart against me."

"Indeed, Paul, my heart is not shut. Oh, far from it! If you knew how I suffered for you, you would not say that."

"Still, you have some thought—some suspicion, which you have not told me."

"Would it be right, my boy, for me to tell my suspicions?"

"Yes, if thereby you could help me to an understanding of that which is now dark and inscrutable. Perhaps if I knew the secret, I might be more resigned."

"And," added the marquis, shaking his head, "perhaps you might be more miserable than you are now."

Paul de Courcy retreated a few paces, and looked sharply into his host's face.

"St. Hubert, you mean much worse than you speak!"

"His lips trembled, and his face grew pale."

"You suspect so much, that you are led to refuse me the hand of your child on your own account!"

"Upon my soul, Paul, you are beginning to hold suspicions!"

"Yes, I am!" exclaimed the young man, sinking back into his chair, and I'll tell you what I suspect—what I fear: there is a stain upon the name I bear!"

The marquis caught his breath suddenly, and averted his face.

"Answer me, sir; am I not right?"

"My dear Paul, I cannot answer you, for I know nothing at all about it!"

"But that is what you think, that is what you suspect! My father has done something that casts a shadow over my life, and leaves a stain upon the name I bear. Oh, my soul, it must be so!"

Arnaut St. Hubert was silent.

"Why do you not speak to me? Why do you not tell me that I am right?"

"Because I do not know that you are right."

"Then tell me that your own thoughts are like mine."

"My dear Paul, you force me to speak that which I had hoped might never pass my lips. I have feared, and I do now fear, that the suspicions which you hold are correct. Still, it may not be so. Do not give way to such thoughts yet."

"Enough!" cried Paul, puffing forth his hands. "The secret is no longer my father's. I can see it all. You only waste words in trying to turn me from that which has already bound your own belief. But, perhaps, some time, the cloud may be cleared away. Oh! it is hard to think that my father is a—"

"Paul!"

"Pardon me! Oh, my life! my soul!"

The youth started up and seized his hat.

"Paul, be calm and reasonable."

"Yes, I will be calm—I will be reasonable; calm as is the heart that is breaking—reasonable as is the soul that sinks to eternal night!"

With these bitter words, Paul de Courcy hurried away from the presence of the marquis; and when he was alone in the park, he threw himself upon the green sward, where his agony found vent in groans and tears.

"How now, Master Paul?"

He started up as he heard these words, and beheld, standing directly before him, Goliath the Bohemian.

"Why do you weep and mourn, young man?"

"For the death of the heart!" groaned Paul.

"You mean for the death of Love?"

"Yes."

"And does Love die so young? Fie! I thought you had more faith. It is yet noon, and the sun rides high. Only cowards and drones throw themselves down at the foot of the mountain and weep. Brave men brace themselves, and push on. Night has not yet come. Have you no strength left?"

"I have no hope," groaned the youth; and strength without hope availeth little."

"Then turn your eyes to heaven and pray."

And with these words the strange man turned away, and was soon lost to sight in an adjacent thicket.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

THE gyroscope was invented by M. Foucault, and first attracted attention from its power of rendering the rotation of the earth visible.

CAVENDISH showed, in 1784, that when electric sparks are passed for a long time through air in contact with water or an alkaline fluid, nitric acid is produced.

STEAM FIRE-ENGINES.

On Saturday, the 3rd, a new steam fire-engine, made by Mr. W. Roberts, was tried at his new works, Millwall. This trial was very interesting, as in addition to the usual experiments of getting up steam, etc., Mr. Roberts offered to show how the wire guards at the windows of the St. Katherine's Dock warehouses baffled the engines.

The fire was laid with shavings, wood, and coal, and the fire lighted at 2h. 54min. 5 sec. A pressure of 2½ lb. was obtained in 3 min. 50 sec., 5 lb. in 4 min. 8 sec., 10 lb. in 4 min. 33 sec., 15 lb. in 4 min. 59 sec., 20 lb. in 5 min. 23 sec., 25 lb. in 5 min. 40 sec., 30 lb. in 5 min. 55 sec., 40 lb. in 6 min. 32 sec., 50 lb. in 6 min. 41 sec., 6 lb. in 6 min. 59 sec., 70 lb. in 7 min. when the engine was started with a 1-inch jet and a 14 sec., 80 lb. in 7 min. 25 sec., 90 lb. in 7 min. 35 sec., and 100 lb. in 7 min. 43 sec., water pressure maintained of 90 lb. to 100 lb. per inch, and after working some time a ¾-inch full jet was opened, when the pressure rose to 130 lb.

The 1-inch jet was then placed 20ft. from the wire guard and the water turned into that pipe, when the wire guard was knocked over; this being replaced and more firmly secured, the water was again turned on, when it was broken into spray by the guard, and the farthest point reached was 27ft. behind the guard, or 47ft. in all. The branch pipe was then elevated about 2 deg., so as to carry the water over the top of the guard, when the water was projected to a distance of 18ft., the angle of the branch pipe being about 30 deg.

These experiments satisfied those present that wire guards were very bad in case of fire in a warehouse, for an engine, however powerful, would have but little chance if the windows were at a considerable height from the ground, as in the case of St. Katherine's Dock. Other experiments were tried with jets of various sizes, and sometimes with two combined, and brought to a close about four o'clock, the engine having worked steadily on from the time of starting.

The engine is of the same construction as the "Excelsior," by the same maker, the length being 10ft., and breadth 4ft. 8 in., weight 31 cwt., and, like the "Excelsior," was entered for the Fothergill Gold Medal offered by the Society of Arts in 1854-5; but although the first was kept four and the last two months in readiness, no trial has taken place, and cannot now, as the engine must be shipped for its destination, viz., Hong Kong.

CANE SUGAR AND GLUCOSE.—Bichloride of carbon such as is obtained by the decomposition of bisulphide of carbon, by chlorine and vapour of water, comports itself differently towards cane sugar and glucose. M. J. Nickles, who made the discovery, states that on enclosing cane sugar in a tube in contact with anhydrous bichloride of carbon, and keeping them for a little time at a temperature of 100 deg. centigrade, the sugar begins to change colour. At first portions of it are covered with brown spots, these gradually increase in size and darken till the whole mass assumes a more or less black colour. When the reaction is prolonged the sugar looks like a mass of

pitch, and if, instead of sugar in powder, crystallized sugar be taken, black sugar-candy is obtained. Under the same conditions the glucose preserves its colour. This difference in the action of bichloride of carbon he believes to be caused by the formation of a little hydrochloric acid, which readily blackens cane sugar, especially as the black colour does not appear when the sugar is previously mixed with a little magnesia.

The velocity of the current through 3,000 miles of Atlantic cable, in 1858, as tested by the mirror galvanometer and Daniell's battery, was only 3,000 per second.

COMMON lucifer-matches are tipped with a composition of chlorate of potash and phosphorus, mixed with ground glass, colouring matters, and a little gum. The so-called noiseless matches consist of phosphorus, 4 parts; nitre, 16 parts; red lead, 3 parts; and strong glue, 6 parts.

WHEATSTONE, in 1834, ascertained the velocity of an electrical current passing through a copper wire to be 288,000 miles per second. Walker, in America, with iron wire, found the speed to be 18,780 miles. O'Mitchell also, experimenting on some iron wire, gave the speed at 28,524 miles.

The following is a good method of bronzing tin castings:—When clean, wash them with a mixture of one part each of sulphate of copper and sulphate of iron in twenty parts of water; dry and wash again with distilled vinegar eleven parts, and verdigris four parts. When dry, polish with colcothar.

POLYBIUS tells us that the Romans, in their infancy as a naval power, built a fleet of 220 ships in three months. Allowing a ton to each man of the 420, who, he states, were embarked in one of these vessels, we have 420 tons as the burden of each, a size which seems hardly reconcilable.

AN ARMOUR-CLAD TURRET-SHIP AT SEA.—W^o gave a full account some time ago of the trial of a small armour-clad sea-going turret-ship, called the *Huascar*, built and fitted with machinery by Messrs. Laird, Brothers, of Birkenhead. We have since obtained some particulars of her passage from this port to Brest. She is a vessel of 1,100 tons, and 300-horse power, nominal, and obtained a speed of 12½ knots at the measured mile, the indicated horse-power on that occasion being 1,650. This vessel, after being completed for sea, left here for Holyhead on the 17th inst., encountered very severe weather on the passage, but proved herself an excellent sea boat, very buoyant, and rolled easily, even when placed broad-side to a heavy sea in the race off Holyhead. She left Holyhead for Brest on the 20th inst., experiencing severe south-west gales in the Channel, but fully maintained her character as a good sea-going ship, and arrived off Ushant on the 22d inst., and anchored safely at Brest on the following morning. The *Huascar* had her guns on board—viz., two 300-pounders, mounted, in the revolving turret, and two 40-pounders (broad-side guns), equivalent to a broadside of 680 lbs. She had also her full complement of shot and shell, and stores and provisions for some months on board, in addition to about 100 tons more coal than she is intended to carry for ordinary service. The trial, therefore, of the *Huascar* during the late severe weather we have had in the Channel, and when loaded unusually deep, is most satisfactory, and proves that armour-clad ships of even small size can be built on Captain Cowper Coles' turret principle to combine speed and sea-going qualities of the first order, carrying at the same time a much heavier and more effective armament than vessels of similar tonnage of any other construction.

If there be a storm on the 19th, 20th, 21st, or 22nd of March, from the S.W. or W.S.W., the succeeding summer, five times in six, is wet.

The fleet of 220 vessels, built by the Romans carried 140,000 men, according to Polybius; while the Carthaginians, against whom they fought upon the sea, embarked more than 150,000.

THERE have been constructed in Ireland thirty-four lines of railway, with an average mileage of 2,261 miles, and only one of these appears to have turned out a remunerative speculation. Two of them are at a standstill, two have been made bankrupt, and thirteen others seem likely to follow.

SHEET-SWEEPING IN INDIA.—A gentleman was once travelling through the Sunderbans in "a native boat," that is to say, a boat surmounted by a mat-constructed cabin. It was December, and as the cold north wind came oozing in through the matting, he drew his blanket over him on getting into bed. He awoke earlier than usual the next morning, feeling very cold, and wondering at the large amount of morning light that pervaded his cabin. To his dismay he found not only that he was blanketless, but that a hole two feet square had been cut in the matting,

While pondering these things, he made the further discovery, that the sheet on which he had lain was no longer on the bed. The inference was clear that he had had a nocturnal visitor. He had heard stories of sheet-lifting before; but not till now, that he had himself been successfully practised upon, did he believe that the feat could be accomplished. The scoundrel who covets the sheet under you, approaches your bedside armed with a feather, with which he gently touches your ear. Accustomed as you are to the buzz of mosquitoes, which, by the way, have a notable penchant for singing in one's ears, you only fidget a little in your sleep, and turning on your side, press the ear that has been operated on, on the pillow. Immediately, the one half of the sheet thus released is rolled up lengthwise close under your back. The feather is then again cautiously applied to the exposed ear; you turn once more, and the other half of the sheet is released. One more tickle, adroitly administered, disengages the sheet altogether, and the rascal no doubt inwardly chuckles as he leaves you to your slumber.

FACETIÆ.

NEVER say "die," unless you are a hairdresser, and have an invention for doing away with grey hair.

A MISERABLE old bachelor, who knows that the present is not leap-year, says: "If you meet a young lady who is not very shy, you had better be a little shy yourself."

DIFFERENT sounds travel with different degrees of velocity. A call to dinner will run over a ten-acre lot in a minute and a half, while a summons to work will take from five to ten minutes.

AN Irishman recently stopped at an hotel where pretty high bills were charged. In the morning the landlord made out the amount of "damage," and presented it. After he had glanced over it, the Irishman looked the landlord in the face, and exclaimed: "Ye put me in mind uv a snipe." "Why?" asked the landlord. "Because you're very nigh all bill."

A POOL STOP.

A BLUSTERING fellow was loudly chatting away in the presence of strangers, whom he was endeavouring to astonish with the recital of his own alleged exploits on various occasions, which he related with a volubility that seemed inexhaustible, and admitted of no question, as he rattled on among his gaping hearers, when suddenly his eye fell upon one whose mouth was not open, but whose eyes were fixed upon him with a significant stare. Taking this to be a sign of disbelief, he angrily demanded:

"What the deuce are you staring at? Eh?"

"I was thinking," was the grave reply.

"Thinking of what? You looked as if you did not believe what I said."

"I was thinking, while listening to your interesting conversation, what a blessing it was that the tongue did not grow any longer."

"Why a blessing?" demanded the chatterer, fiercely. "Do you mean to say my tongue is too long?"

"Quite the contrary, sir; and there's the blessing; if it had been any longer, it couldn't wag so fast; and besides, it might get bitten off."

This mark of consideration and sympathy for the tongue, induced its owner to give it a resting spell.

A KING'S SPEECH.—George III., after opening the session of parliament, asked the Chancellor—"Did I deliver the speech well?" "Very well, sire," was Lord Eldon's answer. "I am glad of it (replied the king), for there was nothing in it."—*Poynder's Literary Extracts* (New Series).

A WILSAWAKE minister, who found his congregation going to sleep one Sunday before he had fairly begun, stopped suddenly and exclaimed: "Brethren, this is not fair; it is not giving a man half a chance. Wait till I get along a bit, and then if I ain't worth listening to, go to sleep; but don't go before I get commenced. Give a man something like a chance, and that is all I ask of you."

THE officials of the Internal Revenue Bureau recently enjoyed a hearty laugh over a letter from a London commission merchant, who wrote to ask an explanation of a notification that some whisky consigned to him had been seized *in transitu*, on suspicion that the tax had not been paid. "I will thank you," said the latter, "to inform me where 'Transitu' is, as I want to send a check there, and I can't find out what railroad it is on!"

TIED UP IN A POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF.—Miss Fawcett, the actress was one evening dressing for a part, when a boy attached to the theatre knocked at the door. "Please, miss, there's a woman at the back, who says she wants two orders to see the play."

"What is her name? Go and ask her. I promised no orders." "I did ask her name, but she said it was no use telling it, because you didn't know her." "Not know her, and she expects orders! Has the woman her faculties about her?" "I think she has, ma'am, for I see her a bundle tied up in a pocket-handkerchief under her arm."

TENNYSON IN THE COLONIES.

MY DEAR PUNCH.—I write to you from a colony of which you may have heard, called New Zealand. To show you that we are making great progress in civilisation, will you allow me to append a little dialogue which took place at a public auction the other day. The auctioneer is, I am happy to say, a member of the House of Representatives.

Auctioneer of the Country. Here is, gentlemen, a superbly bound edition of the *Idols of the King*.

Anzios Bidder. What idols?

Auctioneer. Egyptian, I believe; but that doesn't matter. Who bids?

Yours, antipodically,

—Punch. TATTOO.

A SMALL village in Gower having lately lost its schoolmaster, was desirous of obtaining another. Among other applicants for the situation, a person named Mr. N—, believing himself to be a "fit and proper person" to hold the vacant post, made his appearance, and presented a letter of recommendation, of which the following is a correct copy:—"The Rev. — Sir I have sent N— to you being a Steady man outting the situation."

BAD CUSTOMER.

Landlady: "What gentleman's luggage is this Sam?"

Ancient Waiter: "G'tleman's luggage, 'm! 'O' bleshyer, no, Mum! That's art's traps, that is. They'll 'ave tea here to-night, take a little lodgin' to-morrow, and there they'll be a loafin about the place for months, doin' no good to nobody!"—Punch.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DRAMATIC CUSE.—There is no play of Shakespeare's called "Mustard and Cressida."

BARON METER asks us will it be fine the day after to-morrow? We never divulge a secret; we regret that we really can not tell him.

ONE WHO'S BEEN BITTEN complains that he can't get crocuses to grow in his back-garden. Consult a solicitor.—Punch.

WHY is Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein like Boney the elder? Because he's the captive of (St.) Helena.—Punch.

ON THE FASHIONABLE COLOURED HAIR.—"Deary me," said old Mrs. Guy, "why, now-a-days all the young gals is light-headed."—Punch.

FROM THE ROYAL MEWS.—Her Majesty's state horses consider themselves the *crème de la crème* of equine aristocracy.—Punch.

MEDICAL.—The lights of the metropolis are very bad indeed, and no wonder when they have been suffering so long from a gas-trick fever.—Punch.

THIS IS FRANK.—A new M.P. writes to us to say that the Royal Academy have done wisely in voting a Grant for themselves, for they will never get another out of Parliament.—Punch.

AN AUTHORITY ON ART.—Jones, who is a second Ruskin in a small way, was asked if he would like being the President of the Royal Academy, and this is the solemn dictum he gave. "Why you see, it's plaguy difficult! It requires such a combination of so many different qualities rarely met with in the same individual; that is to say, to make a good President. Now, for instance, I could do the *master in modo* easily enough, but I doubt if I could manage the *forty-ter in R.A.*"—Punch.

A HANDY EXCUSE.—A most elegant lady was taken up for kleptomania, when a gentleman present said, "It was all owing to her taper hand." "And pray, what has that to do with it?" inquired the unsuspecting magistrate. "Why, sir, you see it accounts naturally for her being light-fingered."—Punch.

A TREMENDOUS BLOW.—The wind has been so strong lately that not even artillery has been able to stand against it, as verified by the following:—"The *Journal du Havre* states that during the recent violent hurricane forty cannon pointed on the pier at Cherbourg were thrown into the sea." By Boreas! it must have been blowing "great guns" at the time.—Punch.

GENERAL Crawford, last summer, was on an expedition, when quite a number of Indians gathered to see him and make peace. They complained a great deal of dry weather, and wished the general would make rain the same as Father de Smet, the missionary that used to see them, had done. The general promised them that he would do the best he could. It

happened that shortly afterwards a heavy thunder-shower passed, flooding everything. The Indians were greatly pleased, and called the general a great medicine man. But they said it was a little too much at once. "Well," said the general, "I know it; but I couldn't stop the thing after it started!"

WHY is a schoolboy at the end of his Christmas holidays like Mr. F. Buckland? Because his pleasure is over.—Punch.

A LOW OPINION OF LITERATURE.

1st Casual: "Goin' to sleep at Lambeth to-night, Jim?"

2nd Casual: "Not if I know it; what, an' be took for a contribbutor to the 'Pall Mall'?"—Punch.

A TURKISH PRINCE.

LAST October an Oriental looking personage, representing himself to be Prince Kalimaki, and son of a large landowner in Turkey, went to the Grand Hotel at Marseilles, without a retinue, and with scant luggage. He was installed in the handsomest set of rooms, which had previously been occupied by the Czar.

Next morning he called at the Turkish consulate, and left his card, and the Vice-consul returned the visit. The Prince stated that he wished to buy horses for his father, and was introduced to Carboual, the large horse dealer, who collected his best horses for examination from Arignon and Lyons. The Prince selected several horses at high prices, and subsequently he wrote a telegraphic despatch addressed Ali Pacha, Constantinople, stating the number and price of the horses he had bought, and desiring the Pacha to remit funds immediately to pay for them.

This despatch was taken to the telegraph-office by one of the clerks of the hotel. The landlord, completely deluded, lent the Prince £4,000, and Carboual lent him 1,500 l. A tailor executed his orders to the extent of 1,500 l.

The Prince during his visit to Marseilles fell in love with a respectable young lady, whom he had seen on the road in company with two nuns, and opened negotiations for a marriage. The offer of the Prince was accepted by the lady's brother on her behalf, and an appointment was made at Marseilles to sign the marriage contract. The Prince, intoxicated with the happiness that awaited him, at once made his intended bride some presents, and volunteered to sign two bills of 100,000 l. as an instalment of the settlement he intended to make upon her.

Marriages, however, in France are not hastily made. The brother of the young lady made inquiries at the Turkish consulate. The answer was that nothing whatever was known at the consulate about the Prince, that his visit had been returned without inquiry, and that was all; but that as to the validity of the bills, the parties taking them must decide entirely on their own judgment. The misapp put an end to the princely career of the guest at the Grand Hotel. Confidence was suddenly withdrawn from him; bills poured in all at once, and he was constrained to confess that he had no resources in the world.

When he appeared the other day at the bar of the Correctional Police on a charge of obtaining money under false pretences, it was proved that he was a Levantine named Tanco, a subject of the Bey of Tunis, and that he had lately come out of prison at Cairo. The false Prince was sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

THE King of Denmark has sent General Oxholm on a special mission to Mexico to present the Emperor Maximilian with the Order of the Elephant.

If the last week in February and the first fortnight of March be rainy, and attended with frequent appearances of the rainbow, a wet spring and summer may be expected.

THE ladies of Paris have re-adopted the ancient fashion of going about the city with a mask of black velvet and lace. Some of them show their sense of shame at last.

AQUATIC plants decompose the carbonic acid of the air in the water, and give off oxygen during the influence of light. Part of the carbonic acid contained in the waters of the ocean, lakes, and rivers, is doubtless derived from the respiration of fishes, and would accumulate to a noxious extent were it not replaced by the oxygen emitted by the plants. Hence fish never thrive in waters which are exempt from vegetation.

HAPPINESS OF CHILDREN.—Children may teach us one blessed, one enviable art—the art of being easily happy. Kind nature has given to them that useful power of accommodation to circumstances which compensates for many external disadvantages, and it is only by injudicious management that it is lost. Give

him but a moderate portion of food and kindness, and the peasant's child is happier than the duke's; free from artificial wants, unsatisfied by indulgence, all nature ministers to his pleasure; he can carve out felicity from a bit of hazel twig, or fish for it successfully in a puddle. I love to hear the boisterous joy of a troop of ragged archers, whose cheap playthings are nothing more than mud, snow, sticks, or oyster-shells; or to watch the quiet enjoyment of a half-clothed, half-washed fellow of four and five years old, who sits with a large rusty knife and a lump of bread and bacon at his father's door, and might move the envy of an alderman.

STATISTICS.

LONDON.—There are, it appears, 339 thoroughfares in the city of London, and 163 of these are only of a sufficient width to allow of a single line traffic, while there are 101 which afford only a double line traffic, and only 70 which afford room for three lines or more. There are 60,000 vehicles passing daily through the city.

IMPORTS OF SHEEP.—The imports of sheep and lambs into the United Kingdom last year were on a scale of unprecedented magnitude, having amounted to 763,084 to November 30, as compared with 412,469 to November 30, 1864, and 380,259 to November 30, 1865. In the fifteen years ending 1864, the number of sheep and lambs imported were as follows:—1850, 148,498; 1851, 201,859; 1852, 230,037; 1853, 258,420; 1854, 183,436; 1855, 162,642; 1856, 145,059; 1857, 177,207; 1858, 184,482; 1859, 250,580; 1860, 320,219; 1861, 312,923; 1862, 297,472; 1863, 430,788; and 1864, 496,243. In November, 1865, alone, the imports of sheep and lambs numbered 123,686, while in the whole of 1860 the imports, it will be seen, did not exceed 145,498. The imports were of course stimulated last year by the extraordinary high prices which prevailed for meat, and which may be regarded as almost wholly unjustifiable.

IMPORTS OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL GRAIN, ETC.—During the year 1865 the imports of foreign and colonial grain into Great Britain and Ireland were—4,728,785 qrs. of wheat; 2,195,738 qrs. of barley; 2,766,672 qrs. of oats; 223,150 qrs. of beans; 170,534 qrs. of peas; 47,416 qrs. of rye; 7,862 qrs. of buckwheat; and 1,644,577 qrs. of maize. The quantity of foreign and colonial grain imported into Ireland during the past year was—1,200,097 qrs. of wheat; 33,967 qrs. of barley; 9,264 qrs. of oats; 1 qsr. of peas; 936,616 qrs. of maize; 5 cwts. of Indian meal; and 383,755 cwts. of flour. The shipments of grain, meal, and flour from Ireland to Great Britain during the year 1865 have been—13,974 qrs. of wheat; 813,949 qrs. of oats; 48,292 qrs. of barley; 24,416 qrs. of beans and peas; 2,743 qrs. of malt; 640,494 cwts. of oatmeal; and 129,174 cwts. of white flour. The imports of wheat and flour during the past year have been about 900,000 qrs. less than in 1864. The stocks in the principal ports of the United Kingdom at the end of the past year were about 50,000 qrs. less than in the year 1864.

DURING THE PREVALENCE OF THE EPIDEMIC CHOLERA IN 1834, Mr. Glaisher found the wind blew nearly three times more frequently from between south-west and north-west than from any other point of the compass.

INCREASING TASTE FOR COFFEE IN SWEDEN.—It is curious to see how the taste for coffee has increased in these northern climates during the last century. In 1740, when the population of Sweden amounted to 1,615,000 people, the consumption of coffee was only 13,701 lb., and of sugar 1,675,034 lb. In 1860, the yearly consumption was, of coffee, above 4 lb., and of sugar 10 lb., to every person in the country.

DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE THREE EPIDEMIC VISITATIONS OF CHOLERA IN 1832, 1849, AND 1854, the mercury in the barometer was remarkably and continuously high. On the 18th of February, 1832, the reading of the barometer was 30.60 inches. On the 11th of February, 1849, it reached to 30.91 inches; "a reading not likely," says Mr. Glaisher, "to occur but once in 30 years." During the third outbreak, in 1854, the reading was as high as 30.50 inches.

THE ESCAPE OF STEPHENS.—Proclamations have been issued offering, in addition to the former reward of £1,000 for the apprehension of Stephens, £1,000 for each private information as may lead to his capture, £300 and a free pardon will be given to accomplices in the escape, or to those harbouring him, who may reveal his whereabouts. By the last mail from America we learn that the *New York Tribune* has caused unexpressed consternation among the Fenians in that city by the following announcement concerning the whereabouts of Stephens:—We are at liberty

to state that the report of his being in France, or in any other country than Ireland, are entirely without any foundation. President Stephens is, and has been ever since his escape from British shackles, within less than one mile from the place at which his arrest was effected. This we learn from good authority."

A DREAM.

I DREAMED I had plot of ground,
Once when I chanced asleep to drop,
And that a green hedge fenced it round,
Cloudy with roses at the top.

I saw a hundred mornings rise,
So far a little dream may reach;
And Spring, with Summer in her eyes,
Making the chiefest charm of each.

A thousand vines were climbing o'er
The hedge, I thought, but as I tried
To pull them down, for ever more
The flowers dropt off the other side!

Waking, I said, these things are signs
Sent to instruct us that 'tis ours
Duly to keep and dress our vines,
Waiting in patience for the flowers.

And when the angel feared of all
Across my hearth its shadow spread,
The rose that climbed my garden wall,
Has bloomed the other side, I said.

A. C.

GEMS.

He who has good health is a rich man, and rarely knows it.

Let us love little children; they are the delicate flower-gods of a soon-fading Eden.

To most men, experience is like the stern-lights of a ship, which illumine only the track it has passed.

Fortunes made in no time are like shirts made in no time—it's ten to one if they hang long together.

THE BRIGHT SIDE.—There is more sunshine than rain, more joy than pain, more love than hate, more smiles than tears, in the world. Those who say to the contrary, we would not choose for our companions. The good heart, the tender feelings, and pleasant disposition, makes smiles, love, and sunshine everywhere. A word spoken pleasantly is a large spot of sunshine on the sad heart, and who has not seen its effects? A smile is like the breaking out of the sun from behind a dark cloud, to him who has no friend in the world. The tear of affection, how brilliantly it shines along the dark pathway of life. A thousand gems make a milky-way on earth, more glorious than the cluster above our heads.

THE BEST CURE FOR SORROW.—Attempts to drown the sense of misfortune in strong drink are the climax of human folly. Intoxication eventually aggravates and intensifies every evil which it is invoked to alleviate. It has been thus from the day when man first "put an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains," and thus it will be to the end of time. No sane and sober man denies the fact. Even the habitual drunkard, in his brief intervals of reason, shudderingly admits it. Yet thousands of intellectual beings—many of them richly endowed with mental gifts—seek consolation from the bottle in the hour of affliction, though revelation, history, observation, and instinct alike teach them that of all the broken reeds upon which weakness ever leaned, the false excitement caused by liquor is the most treacherous. It is passing strange!—one of those anomalies to which philosophy furnishes no clue, and for which we can only account by supposing that a power independent of themselves, against whose influence mere reason is no sure protection, betrays men into ruin.

FLOGGING BOYS IN THE NAVY.—Lads under 18 years of age will not in future be subjected to the terrible punishment of flogging in the navy.

HERCULEANUM.—A house belonging to a barber has been recently discovered at Herculeanum. The shop of "the artist," the furniture, the benches on which the citizens sat while waiting for their turn, the store, and even the pins employed in the ladies' head-dresses, were found in an astonishing state of preservation.

It is pleasant to record any instance of consideration for art and its professors. Accordingly, let us state that the Queen, immediately on hearing of the death of the late President of the Royal Academy, and without making further inquiries, sent an autograph letter to Lady Eastlake, with condolences, and an offer to place a pension of £300 per annum on the

Civil List at her disposal. It is reported that the art library of the deceased will be dispersed; it is certainly desirable that the noble collection of materials for the history of art should be kept together, either in the hands of the Royal Academy—which is easily in need of something better than the so-called library it now possesses—or at the South Kensington Museum, where a very serviceable collection of the kind in question is already existent.

ETYMOLOGY OF NAMES OF COUNTRIES.

EUROPE signifies a country of white complexion; so named because the inhabitants there were of a lighter complexion than those of either Asia or Africa.

ASIA signifies between, or in the middle, from the fact that geographers then placed it between Europe and Africa.

AFRICA signifies the land of corn, or ears. It was celebrated for its abundance of corn and all sorts of grain.

SPAIN, a country of rabbits, or conies. This country was once so infested with these animals, that the inhabitants petitioned Augustus for an army to destroy them.

ITALY, a country of pitch, from its yielding great quantities of black pitch.

GAUL, modern France, signifies yellow-haired, as yellow hair characterized its first inhabitants.

HIRIBERIA is utmost, or last habitation; for beyond this, westward, the Phœnicians never extended their voyages.

BRITAIN, the country of tin; as there were great quantities of lead and tin found on the adjacent island. The Greeks call it Albion, which signifies in the Phœnician tongue either white or high mountains, from the whiteness of its shores, or the high rocks on the western coast.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CEMENT FOR AQUARIA.—A good cement for aquaria, or for joining rockwork, the best is Portland; if, however, a cement for rendering the joints of the tank water-tight, try the following:—White sand, one part; litharge, one part; resin, one-third part; mixed into a paste with boiled linseed-oil.

COTTON AS A PRESERVATIVE OF FRUIT.—Common raw cotton is one of the best and most simple means of preserving fruit for a long while. It is in general use for keeping grapes fresh all winter. The method employed is as follows: The bunches are gently laid between a layer of cotton in a glass or earthenware jar. The jar is then corked down and the corks dipped in melted resin. Of course, it is much easier to preserve apples and pears, which need only be laid between two layers of cotton on the pantry-shelf or store-room.

MISCELLANEOUS.

NORTH WINDS, with a tendency to north-east, give rise, according to Mr. Hingeston, to cholera.

It is said that the burning of immense tracts of peat beds in Northern Germany is the cause of the peculiar dry fogs which at particular periods sweep over considerable districts on the Continent.

A PIKE weighing 29 lbs., 3 feet 8 inches in length, and 1 foot 11 inches in girth, was caught recently in one of the lakes near Belvoir Castle by the Duke of Rutland's fishermen.

WHEN YOU eat an orange in the street, put the peel in your pocket; it has an agreeable smell, and when dry will light a fire. To this use of the orange peel it will never cause a fall or break a limb.

THE ONE O'CLOCK CLUB will be known as the Young England. It has wisely changed its name from the former to the latter. It will consist of a thousand members, and the scale of entrance and annual subscriptions will be very moderate.

THERE IS at the present time in St. Mary's Workhouse, in Reading, an old woman, nearly 90 years of age, who is able to repeat the whole of the second book of Milton's "Paradise Lost." The woman of whom we are speaking learnt these lines, at the instance of her mother, when she was a child of nine years, and has not forgotten the lesson since. She is, it need scarcely be added, a person of unusual intelligence.

MILDNESS OF THE SEASON.—A very unusual sight may now be witnessed on an apple tree in a garden belonging to Mr. C. Uzzell, of Westonbirt. The tree bore a good crop of apples at its usual time, and was in blossom at the fall of the year, and on it may now be seen the second crop of fair-sized apples. A correspondent says:—"I have eaten some of the fruit, and it is of full apple flavour; and as many as sixty apples are now on the tree."

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. R. B. should at once consult a surgeon.

EDITH.—The Jerusalem artichoke derives its nitrogen immediately from the atmosphere.

M. Y. X.—In order that the date-palm ripen its fruit, the mean annual temperature must exceed 70 deg.

M. A. S.—The noble lord's clubs in London are the Wyndham and the Carlton, at either of which a letter will reach him.

J. S.—At a height of 500 miles above the earth, a cubic inch of air would expand so as to occupy a sphere equal in diameter to the orbit of Saturn.

VIOLET S., who is considered good looking, with dark hair and blue eyes, aged twenty-one, wishes to correspond with a tall and fair gentleman.

Eva C. wishes to correspond with a tall gentleman of dark complexion, is considered pretty, has light brown hair and blue eyes; aged nineteen.

A. N.—About one year in five is subject to the dry extreme, and one in ten to the wet extreme. The wet years are uniformly cold, the dry invariably warm.

H. L.—The rainfall on the western coasts of England ranges from 50 in. to 55 in., and on the south-eastern from 15 in. to 24 in.

A CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER.—Probably at Doctors' Commons if so, the cost of subscribing would depend upon the length of the will. You would do well to consult a solicitor.

B. J.—Dr. T. Thomson has shown that the size of an atom of lead cannot amount to so much as the one-881,490,000,000th of a cubic inch.

L. R.—At every age, from eight years upward, the exhalation of carbonic acid from the lungs is greater in males than in females.

E. R. W. is very unhappy for the want of a wife and hopes that one of our fair readers will take pity on him. "E. R. W." is 5 ft. 7 in., has dark hair and eyes, is a good tradesman, and could keep a wife with every comfort.

ORMOND A. Z., who is twenty-three years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, dark complexioned, considered rather good-looking, and possessed of a moderate income, with expectations, hopes to attract the notice of some of our fair readers.

A. E. I. offers herself matrimonially. In a brunette, twenty years of age, 4 ft. 6 in. in height, with dark eyes, brown curly hair, small mouth and nose, has had a good plain English education, and is possessed of a large amount of knowledge.

EDITH G., an only child, with good expectations, in the middle station of life, eighteen years of age, tall, with blue eyes and brown wavy hair, would like to open a correspondence with a tall, dark gentleman, in comfortable circumstances, and in a position equivalent to her own. A card requested.

LEAH E., seventeen years of age, with dark blue eyes and brown hair, considered good looking, a good pianist, and fond of home, wishes to correspond matrimonially with a clerk having sufficient income to support a wife. A gentleman with brown hair and blue eyes preferred.

T. N. asks whether it is in accordance with the rules of etiquette for a gentleman to raise his hat on addressing a female who is considered to be in a higher sphere? Certainly, and to a female in a lower sphere also. The handwriting is tolerably good; it might be worse, and certainly it might be better.

DEBORAH, a gentleman of birth, education, musical talent, and possessing a manly, loving heart, and "the" last, not least, 200l. per annum, wishes to correspond with a lady intelligent, well educated, graceful and good-looking, and in possession of some means. He is thirty-four, 5 ft. 7 in., has travelled a great deal, and is of gentlemanly appearance; the lady if tall and dark preferred.

ALICE and MATILDA, sisters, would like to correspond with two gentlemanly young men. They must be dark, and not under twenty-four, with good incomes. "Alice" is seventeen, has dark brown eyes, light brown curly hair, and is 5 ft. 6 in. in height. "Matilda" is eighteen, has dark brown curly hair, large blue eyes, and is 5 ft. 4 in. Both are considered very pretty by their friends. They are amiable, pleasing, and affectionate, and would make their homes happy.

AGAMEMNON.—You are correct. The queen's robing room in the Houses of Parliament is as yet unfinished. It is, or rather will be, one of the most magnificent chambers in the building, but so much remains to be done that we have no hesitation in saying its completion will occupy artists and decorators for the next twenty years. The decorations will be of a unique and gorgeous character. One picture only is at present finished, having for its subject the Battle of Waterloo. This is of great size, and a companion picture to the Battle of the Nile on the opposite side, now in the course of progress. There are about twenty other panels to be tiled in a

like manner on the most memorable subjects of modern British history, but even the outlines of the latter are not yet discernable. Of course Her Majesty did not use this chamber when she opened Parliament in February, but a temporary room was fitted up for her with every possible convenience. The annual expenses of the "houses" and their entourage is indeed large. In the estimates to be introduced this season there are 124,000l. for improvements in St. Margaret's Church, which is the chapel used by members of Parliament, and 565,000l. for new approaches to the Houses of Parliament. The latter sum of course includes the purchase money of houses in the vicinity.

WOODSTOCK, aged twenty-six, and in receipt of 200l. a year from a permanent employment, would like to meet with some pretty, amiable, accomplished girl who would make him a good wife. She must be a lady, that is indispensable: money no object, though of course not objected to. Woodstock is, he believes, good looking, and of a very affectionate disposition. No one who has not been educated and brought up a lady need reply to this. The lady's age must not exceed twenty-five. We have no objection to a foreigner.

JAMES RICHARDS.—Notwithstanding that you become of age nine months before your five years' apprenticeship expire, you are morally, even if not legally, bound to serve the whole of your time. You say that at the time of signing the indentures, your master knew that you would be twenty-one before the completion of the five years—well, so did you, and also that your master placed confidence in your honour. Your advice (which you say) is, therefore, do not be guilty of a breach of trust, even if you are legally enabled so to do, but serve your time as an honest youth should, and your future career will not be the worse for having kept to the terms of your agreement.

MY LOVE.

A single flower up-springing,
Deep in a lonesome dell,
Where only the wild bee's singing
Of its sacred home may tell.

A mountain stream out-fashing
Where never a foot may tread,
Save the wild goat's, freely dashing
Over its rocky bed.

A gem on a lone strand beaming,
Brilliant and fair of hue,
Where never a white sail gleaming
Comes over the waters blue.

Such is the maid that dwelleth
In her woodland cottage lone,
With a light in her eye that telleth
Of love that is all mine own.

As the chamomile seeks the bosom
Of the lonely mountain spring,
As the wild bee loves the blossom,
Thus to my love I cling!

A. G.

FRANKLIN DUNBAR, nineteen, well educated, a good boxer and fencer (what lady can resist such claims), in possession of about 800l. per year, with a high forehead, dark blue eyes, black curly hair, an aquiline nose, firmly cut mouth, and full chin, hopes to hear from some of our fair readers. F. D. puts it up to the following questions:—1st. Do you think reading makes the head large? 2nd. A friend asks me to ask how to get this. To the first question, much depends upon the quality of brain within the head, as a rule, the mental like the physical organs grow by what they feed on. To the second, try Banning.

A COCKNEY.—London is, without doubt, the largest city in the world; moreover, it has grown, despite the fears and ordinances of royal despotism. Queen Elizabeth, feeling alarmed at the rapid increase in the number of visitors to, and settlers in London, endeavoured to check its growth; while James I., yet more alarmed, issued proclamation after proclamation against the attractions of the metropolis. The English Solomon even went so far as to cause his attorney-general to exhibit *ex officio* informations in the odious "Star chamber" against persons who sojourned in London contrary to the royal edicts. Charles I. complained that a great number of nobility and gentry, with their families, had resorted to London, residing there, contrary to the ancient usage of the English nation. But all these orders, threats, and remonstrances were in vain, and London continued to increase, notwithstanding the confident predictions of pestilence and famine from over population. Evelyn, writing in 1684, says that London had doubled in size within his recollection; and Sir William Petty, in 1687, calculated that the capital had increased sevenfold since the time of Elizabeth. Charles II., at first made a feeble attempt to discourage the attendance of suitors and courtiers, who were not altogether welcome; but he soon desisted, and London became at once and for ever the centre of fashion and of the arts which belonged to civilized and polished life.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:—

E. ALBERT wishes to correspond with "Mademoiselle T." MARGOT would like to correspond with "S. R. H." She is seventeen, of medium height, with light brown hair, dark blue eyes, considered good looking, of a very respectable family, and possesses an income of about 300l. per annum. J. G. H. will be happy to correspond with "Maude Clinton." Is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, and has an income of 300l. a year.

GERALD and EDMUND, believing that "Alberta" and "Louise" are just the two ladies they are looking out for, wish to be placed in exchange, *correspond* with them. "Gerald" is 5 ft. 9 in., dark, rather good looking, and will come into a small fortune in a month or two. "Edmund" is 5 ft. 8 in., of light complexion, fair hair, and good looking. Both are well educated, and of good family.

PHOEBUS would be happy to correspond with "M. B. M." with a view to matrimony. He is thirty-five years of age, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, a widower with one child, and a clerk by profession—also used to trade; of an agreeable temper, fond of home, and would make a loving husband.

SAMUEL A., having seen the appeal of "Maude Clinton," begs to introduce himself to her notice. He is twenty, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, light brown hair and moustache, very good tempered, and pretty good looking—but of that the young lady can judge for herself when she has his *corrie*, which he will send conditionally that "Maude" will send hers in return. "S. A." frankly says that he has but a salary

of 50l. per annum; and considerably adds that he would consent either to be married immediately, or to wait two or three years. If (adds the capacious-hearted "S. A.") "Maude" does not answer to this, perhaps some other kind young lady will.

CHIMUS wishes to correspond with "Maude Clinton." He is tolerably well educated, has a fair knowledge of French and Latin, and is a good pianist. Personal qualifications moderate, dark moustache and whiskers, and twenty-four years of age.

X. Y. Z. will be happy to correspond with "Maude Clinton." He is twenty-two, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, dark, and rather good looking.

J. W. H. would be glad to exchange *corrie* and correspond with "Edith." Is twenty-three years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, rather dark, and in pretty good circumstances.

T. G. O. would like to exchange *corrie* with "Helen." He is twenty-three years of age, 5 ft. 11 in., and considered good looking.

ELISE ADAM will cheer and fondly cherish the lonely heart of "Malcolm Graham." If he responds by a *corrie* and desires to change hearts and *corrie* with her; or she would be happy to hear from and exchange *corrie* with "J. R. L." if he be steady, affectionate, and a true Christian.

L. F. J. would be glad to correspond with "Octavia," being in a good mercantile and social position, he can offer her a most comfortable home in one of the best suburbs of London.

A. W. wishes to exchange *corrie* with "Nelly." He is a clerk in a public office, with an income of 120l. per annum, tall, dark, and gentlemanlike, fond of music, and a tolerable performer on the piano and violin.

BARRIA responds to the appeal of "M. A. C." She is fair, good-looking, tall, domesticated, and of business habits, also sure she will make a good wife. "Bartha" would like the gentleman to be forty years of age.

ARTHUR, having seen the appeal of "Lily Dale" and "Emma C." (No. 143), is desirous of communicating with either young lady, with a view to matrimony. "Arthur" is twenty-four, a clerk, highly respectable, has received a good education, and is a pretty good musician. He is tall, and of rather fair complexion (not very, as I think he is possible good looking). As a preliminary would exchange *corrie* if desired. (Haste is but a vulgar excuse for bad writing. "Arthur's" calligraphy, however, is very good, about a little too mincing.)

G. G. C. will be most happy to correspond matrimonially with "Quovisip." He is twenty years of age, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, brown hair, hazel eyes, and fond of home. *Corrie* exchanged.

A. S. and E. A. R. would be glad to correspond with "Fred" and "D. E." "A. S." is 5 ft. 5 in. in height. "E. A. R." is 5 ft. 2 in. in height. Both are thoroughly domesticated, and passably good looking; ages, eighteen.

ANNE GRAMHAM would be happy to receive a *corrie* and address from "An Old First Officer," whom she flatters herself she would make a charming bride.

EMILY would be happy to correspond with "M. A. C."

FRANCIS C. JENNY, eighteen years of age, of medium height, dark complexion, amiable disposition, and considered good looking, thinks she would suit "E. C." *Corrie* to be exchanged.

JESSIE SUMMERS would like to be introduced to "Charley Winter," with a view to matrimony. She is nearly twenty, tall, fair, has rather dark brown hair, a good musician, and is domesticated. *Corrie* to be exchanged.

E. Y. J. is willing to correspond with "Lily," and begs of her to forward her *corrie* without delay.

G. J. C. and his BROTHER wish to correspond with the two sisters, "Rose" and "Lily." "G. J. C." with becoming modesty and bashfulness, says:—"I shall be most happy to hear from 'Rose,' as I think she is one on whom I could bestow my affection. It would perhaps be as well to say as little as possible respecting my looks, for fear of being thought vain; but I may state that I have black curly hair, black whiskers, dark hazel eyes, am 5 ft. 7 in. in height, and in my twenty-first year. I am by profession an artist, with a good education, and well calculated to do well in this life's battles. *Corrie* to be exchanged. My brother 'A. H. C.' (adds 'G. J. C.') is in like manner smitten with 'Lily,' he referring the flower of the field, and I of the garden."

JAMES RHODES and EDWARD JAMES having seen the appeal of "Rose and Lily," would be very happy to correspond with those ladies with a view to matrimony. "James Rhodes" is 5 ft. 9 in. in height, dark, considered good-looking, well educated, fond of home, and believes he would make a good husband; age, twenty-one. "Edward James" is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, dark complexion, in possession of a large income, and is fond of home.

"A. B." will be most happy to correspond with "F. W." for the furtherance of their mutual wishes. He trusts that "F. W." will enlighten him as to her attainments and position in society. If satisfactory will gladly exchange *corrie*.

HARRY B., in answer to the appeal of "Lily Dale," begs to offer himself as a candidate for her hand and heart. He is twenty-one, 5 ft. 7 in. in height, and about to commence business, but (wonderful creature) does not care for money with a wife. *Corrie* to be exchanged.

ANNE LATREK wishes to open a correspondence matrimonially with "M. A. C." the unhappy bachelor. She thinks she would be able to render the rest of his life happy. She is fair, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, of an amiable disposition, domesticated, and by some considered fascinating. She would endeavour to make him a loving little wife, and will be happy to exchange *corrie*.

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